



How to implement the Better Buddies Framework in your school



THE BETTER BUDDIES FRAMEWORK

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partnering to prevent bullying

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FOREWORD

Many schools have buddy programs, but The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's Better Buddies Framework stands out as one of the best peer support frameworks in Australia. Not only does it have the wonderful mascot of Buddy Bear, the brainchild of Maree Stanley and illustrator Michael Salmon, but it incorporates a range of additional components that have been identified in research studies as contributing to better outcomes in buddy programs.

One of these components is the provision of resource materials to train older buddies in a range of key social skills. These skills (e.g. negotiation) and the pro-social values that underpin them, are used as peer support skills. However, at the same time, older buddies are also modelling and discussing these social skills and values with their younger buddies, thereby enhancing their social and emotional learning of both. Research studies have found that training to enhance these important skills helps students to be more effective in their peer support role. In the Better Buddies Framework, they are given initial training in a range of social and support skills, then use ongoing reflection sheets (pages 54-55) to identify any potential problems while they are buddies.

A second component is the inclusion of 'Buddy Leaders', a support group of older buddies who work together to improve their peer support skills. A Buddy Leader group also provides a pool of students who can take the place of an older buddy who may have left the school or is away for a short period, because some younger buddies can feel sad or concerned when their buddy isn't at school. Buddy Leaders are also encouraged to help plan, prepare and implement other Better Buddies activities in their school.

The Better Buddies Framework focuses strongly on activities and strategies that reinforce positive and pro-social values such as caring, valuing difference, kindness, respect and including others. Better Buddies encourages schools to build other buddy relationships across all levels of the school. A range of engaging activities are included in the Better Buddies Framework, many of which link to core aspects of primary curricula.

Older students and their younger buddies all benefit from participation in the program. Older students develop an extra sense of meaning and purpose through their work with their younger buddies, while the younger students develop a strong, caring connection with an older buddy and are also assisted in their academic, social and emotional learning. The curriculum support activities in the Framework are categorised according to their learning area focus and each includes a list of the social skills and values to be reinforced for the older and younger buddies. They also provide options for including Buddy Bear if applicable.

This revised Better Buddies Framework fills in many of the gaps that have been identified both in research studies and observations, and which many of you would have identified in practice. We think you will really enjoy using this revised framework and feel even more satisfied with the outcomes for all students involved in your buddy program.

Dr Helen McGrath

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VISIT THE BETTER BUDDIES WEBSITE

www.betterbuddies.org.au

Visit the website for further Better Buddies support resources, additional up-to-date information and fun activities for students.

Simply use your teacher login to access resources that include:

- interactive whiteboard files for applicable Better Buddies student activity sheets
- the Better Buddies 'Just for Fun' colouring and puzzle activity sheets
- the Better Buddies checklists
- hints for using Buddy Bear in the classroom
- information about how to build buddy relationships throughout your school
- details of 'Be My Buddy Module' – buddies in a retirement village
- details of 'Buddies for Wildlife' – a focus on native Australian wildlife.

INTRODUCTION





SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Figure 1 – The core features of the Better Buddies Framework





How to use the Better Buddies teacher resource

The Better Buddies teacher resource is divided into easy-to-navigate sections to help you plan, implement, sustain and understand the Better Buddies Framework.

At the beginning of the Planning, Implementation and Sustaining sections of this resource, you will find a checklist. These are guides to the steps you can take to embed the Better Buddies program into your curriculum, help to build strong connections between students and create a friendly, caring school community where bullying is reduced. Each year you will build on what you have achieved previously to enrich the experience for the whole school. You will reach your official Better Buddies status at the end of the implementation stage. You can view the full, three-stage checklist in the login section of our website. This checklist is not sequential; rather, the items have been grouped as key focus areas within the school setting.

This resource forms the basis of your buddy system, however we also have a range of additional lesson plans, modules, activities (including interactive whiteboard activities), resources and information available for you on the Better Buddies website.

Section 6 of this resource includes information on 'eSmart Schools', one of the Foundation's other initiatives. You will find activities where the buddies can work together to become 'Smart, Safe and Responsible' online. For more information about eSmart Schools please visit www.esmart.org.au

Better Buddies – a Framework for change

Creating friendly and caring school communities

We know that children thrive academically in environments where they feel safe and happy.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation's Better Buddies Framework is based on a considerable body of evidence, with recent research conducted by the Foundation (see Section 10) showing conclusively that buddy systems help to combat bullying and other forms of anti-social behaviour such as harassment and teasing. They do so by helping to create environments in which respect for others is highly valued. Such a school environment is sometimes described as being 'pro-social'. The Better Buddies Framework helps children develop empathy, compassion and the skills and values associated with these traits, by participating in carefully constructed activities that help them learn to better care for others.

Better Buddies is designed to enhance existing buddy programs or introduce a buddy program to schools for the first time. The evidence-based framework complements existing school welfare/wellbeing programs, is easy to implement and links to National Curriculum initiatives. Other benefits of Better Buddies are that it teaches social skills, incorporates a wide range of buddy activities, provides training for older buddies, has Buddy Leader groups and works to reduce bullying by strengthening relationships.

One of the most common forms of violence in the lives of children is bullying: one in four Australian children is bullied every few weeks (Cross et al, 2009). Being bullied can have a damaging effect on a child, which can have a lasting effect on their life. In addition, children who are involved in bullying behaviours are more likely to commit anti-social behaviour and criminal acts. Bullying is a relationship issue that needs relationship solutions (Pepler, 2006). Building a robust buddy system in your school encourages the development of special relationships that help to prevent bullying and reduce its incidence (McGrath & Noble, 2007). When you implement Better Buddies in your school you are helping to create a safer, happier environment for all members of the community.

'I'm special because I care about others'

This statement was written by six-year-old Alannah Mikac in her journal. It is the underlying principle of the Better Buddies Framework – to develop friendly and caring school communities where bullying is reduced. We encourage schools to adopt Alannah's statement as their theme.



Based on evidence about effective practices

Research suggests that certain features of buddy systems are essential to their success.

These include:

- training and debriefing for the older students
- structured sessions
- the addition of peer tutoring
- effective pairing of younger and older students
- optimal age difference of three years between buddies
- voluntary participation only
- effective preparation
- commitment
- teacher ‘buddying’
- awareness within the school community (Stanley, 2005).

The final feature, awareness within the school community, is a significant factor of a buddy program’s success and refers to awareness by students, staff and parents. For a buddy program to be well-received, parents must be informed and prepared in advance so that they can be supportive of their child’s participation in the program.

Supports transition to school

An essential characteristic of a buddy system is the involvement of older students in positive, supportive, and structured one-on-one relationships with younger students.

In most cases the formal buddy relationship continues for one year to ease transition into the primary school. Schools invest time and resources into planning and implementing transition programs. Typically, this is the time when students develop their sense of belonging to their school.

“It is also clear from the research that a child’s adjustment to the first year of school and the patterns of behaviour and achievement established during this period, have important implications for the trajectories of future academic and social success.”
(Dockett & Perry, 2004).

A further advantage of a buddy program over other peer support schemes is that it involves all the students in a class or year level as buddies. All the older students become a leader in their own right, independent of the leadership positions within their school.

While Better Buddies ideally involves children in their first and last years of primary school, schools are encouraged to extend a peer support structure to the rest of the school. In addition, schools are encouraged to run four whole-school Better Buddies events to extend the values across the entire school community (see Section 7).

Explicitly teaches pro-social values and skills

The Better Buddies Framework is based on evidence suggesting that the teaching of pro-social values and skills contributes to the development of resilience in children – an important protective factor when they experience hardship or loss throughout their lives (see Section 10).

In Better Buddies, children in their first and last years of primary school buddy up and learn the Better Buddies values through formal weekly activities and informal interaction outside of the classroom. Better Buddies enables younger children to feel safe and cared for, while older children feel valued and respected.



Pro-social values

Pro-social values are those deeply held values that lead to positive behaviour. They involve the ability to empathise with others and to be able to ask the question ‘how would I feel if I was that person?’

The Better Buddies values are:

- friendliness
- caring for others
- respect
- responsibility
- valuing difference
- including others.

Explicitly teaching these values to students develops links between their thoughts, feelings and actions that can positively influence their decisions about the way they treat others.

Pro-social skills

Pro-social skills are those that result in behaviours which lead to harmonious co-existence and emotional wellbeing. We recommend the explicit teaching and reinforcement of pro-social values and skills at every level of the school and in each subject area.

There are over thirty social skills which have been identified as being important to a person’s full emotional and social functioning, but the six that warrant most attention in schools are:

1. negotiation
2. active listening
3. respectful disagreeing
4. managing conflict
5. cooperating by sharing resources and workloads and taking turns
6. ‘positive tracking’ (the ability to find the positives in a situation). (McGrath & Noble, 2003).

This direct approach to the teaching of pro-social skills and values, focusing on skill development, is based on the fact that although some members of the school community might be able to respond to simple encouragement to behave in ways that contribute to a safe school, most will need to be directly taught the skills that lead to those actions. Explicitly teaching these values and skills also makes it more likely that such behaviours will be maintained over time. Effective skill development may also require opportunities to challenge and change attitudes (McGrath, 2006).

A pro-social school environment

A pro-social school environment is one where:

- all adults in the school community model respectful, inclusive, accepting, empathic and friendly behaviours for the students
- students are explicitly taught pro-social values and skills
- curriculum and pedagogy are consciously developed to produce cooperative learning
- parents are a central part of the school community
- students have an authentic voice in school decisions
- behaviour management is based on values and relationships
- teachers are consistent in their responses in line with the school’s wellbeing and discipline policy
- regular audits are conducted to check on the wellbeing of students
- the school leadership applies a wellbeing approach to organisational structures and policies.



Better Buddies builds relationships

The Better Buddies Framework is one of a number of programs known as ‘peer support’. They are very engaging and involve activities that children naturally enjoy, such as talking to one another, playing games, active participation and recognition for all their efforts. Buddy programs encourage a relationship between older and younger peers through regular collaboration between their classes and foster connections across the entire school community. They focus on the social contexts in which bullying occurs, and address bullying by encouraging children to form positive and supportive relationships with one another.

“Peer supporters are students who work within the school environment to support others to participate as active cooperative and happy school community members. Students who are members of peer support teams learn to listen to and support fellow students. Peer support promotes students’ willingness to help each other and create a safe and happy environment.”
(Cross, 2004).

Buddy systems make it easier for younger students to ask an older student for help with a problem. This is important, as we know that many young people find it difficult to ask for help. Further, buddy systems work well because older students have greater credibility within the school and are more approachable. They are more likely to demonstrate understanding and experience in relation to the particular situations that younger peers face. Buddy systems have been shown to lead the development of stronger pro-social values and improved social skills in all students, especially the skills of listening and conflict management in the older buddies. Older buddies accept some responsibility for the behaviours of their younger buddies. They are more motivated to behave well and act kindly in order to impress their young buddy and be a positive role model.

The Better Buddies Framework is designed to span across the full school year. Each fortnight students have formal structured time with a teacher and less formal unstructured contact with their buddies in the playground. Buddies tend to play more cooperatively and in a more friendly fashion during these times (Cross, 2004). They also model pro-social behaviour for other students.

Better Buddies can strengthen the school community by helping to challenge stereotypes, misconceptions or fears that students hold about younger or older age groups. Students feel valued and supported, help teach important social skills and create a caring ethos in the school. Better Buddies can create a connection between older and younger buddies, enabling them to bond more closely with their schooling, and increase the likelihood of positive social behaviour. Research suggests that when students feel connected to their school, they also feel valued and safe and are less likely to bully or be bullied (Stanley, 2005).

Better Buddies is compatible with other wellbeing initiatives

Better Buddies is designed to complement other school initiatives rather than compete with them. Even though the Better Buddies Framework is a wonderful starting point or additional support for your current buddy system, it can still be adapted to meet the cultural and social needs and priorities of each school. Better Buddies supports and is supported by such things as values education, social skills teaching, and continual reinforcements of messages about safety, respect, caring and no-bullying messages.

Some compatible programs are:

- Bounce Back!
- KidsMatter
- MindMatters
- You can do it
- Friendly Schools PLUS
- Circle Time



Why Better Buddies works

Better Buddies aims to reduce bullying by fostering positive relationships and it works because it:

- is based on recent research
- provides a training package for older buddies
- includes a wide range of engaging activities for buddies to complete together
- provides Buddy Leader groups to ensure that buddy absences do not affect the program.

The Better Buddies Framework was written by teachers for teachers so it is designed to be implemented with minimal increase in workload. It fits readily within the National Curriculum and can easily be incorporated into any classroom program. For further benefits of Better Buddies visit our website.

Strategies for Better Buddies as part of a wellbeing approach

Use pro-active rather than reactive strategies

The Better Buddies Framework is a pro-active framework. Through the student training and classroom activities, the Framework explicitly teaches children the vital social skills of friendship, support and empathy and encourages them to help other children, making a difference in their lives.

Strategies that merely react towards issues of student management lean towards being punitive, which can create further problems with discipline, relationships and school culture. Pro-active strategies, such as those promoted in Better Buddies, tend to focus on building relationship-based cultures in which wellbeing is a priority.

Start early in a student's life at school

Helping children to form empathic, supportive and caring relationships with an older child as soon as they enter school is one of the best ways of ensuring they will develop into caring, responsible adults. Research has shown that, in order to combat bullying and other anti-social behaviours effectively, it is best to start as early as possible in a child's life (Stanley, 2010). The Better Buddies Framework is an early intervention program which provides excellent support for these cross-age relationships.

Better Buddies can help teachers treat negative behaviours consistently and in line with the school's policies, whilst reinforcing the Better Buddies values.

Revisit concepts, values and skills

Social skills need to be taught explicitly and children should be given plenty of opportunity to use them in practice situations. When older students help teach the younger ones, they are reminded of skills they learned in earlier years. The activities in the Better Buddies Framework are specifically designed to help children understand and use these values in safe, supportive social settings. Students should be given the opportunity to revisit Better Buddies concepts, values and skills in each year of their primary schooling.

The Better Buddies Framework activities help students to develop pro-social skills. Older children revisit these from a different viewpoint – that of the tutor – and reflect on them and their purpose.

Directly teach positive ways to think and act and specific skills

Better Buddies uses the cognitive-behaviour principle: the way a person thinks affects how they feel and act and this helps students develop a more optimistic approach to setbacks they experience. When children blame themselves for all negative events, even ones they had no control over, they are at risk of developing a persistently pessimistic response to life. It is good to help them develop an explanatory style that avoids self-blame and sees negative events as temporary, specific and occurring for a variety of reasons (McGrath & Noble, 2003).



The following social skills can be taught, used and revised in a variety of settings with Better Buddies:

- playing fairly
- being a good winner
- being a good loser
- staying positive
- negotiating
- sharing
- taking turns
- including everyone
- treating other team members and opposition players with respect
- not using putdowns or blaming others (McGrath, 1997).

Directly teach social skills and talk about them. Put reminders (such as posters) around the room.

Concentrate on one or two skills at a time and revise them frequently, especially before a social skills game (McGrath, 1997).

Use a range of other components

Using multiple components (rather than relying on a single approach or program) is more effective in achieving cultural change and reducing negative behaviours. The more components that are focused on wellbeing, the better the outcomes for the students. Relying on a single program or implementation is not a good strategy; using multiple components is more effective. Effective school-wide prevention programs usually contain at least five different aspects of social and emotional learning.

Better Buddies has been developed to complement other components and initiatives your school may use, such as Circle Time and Bounce Back!

Introducing Buddy Bear

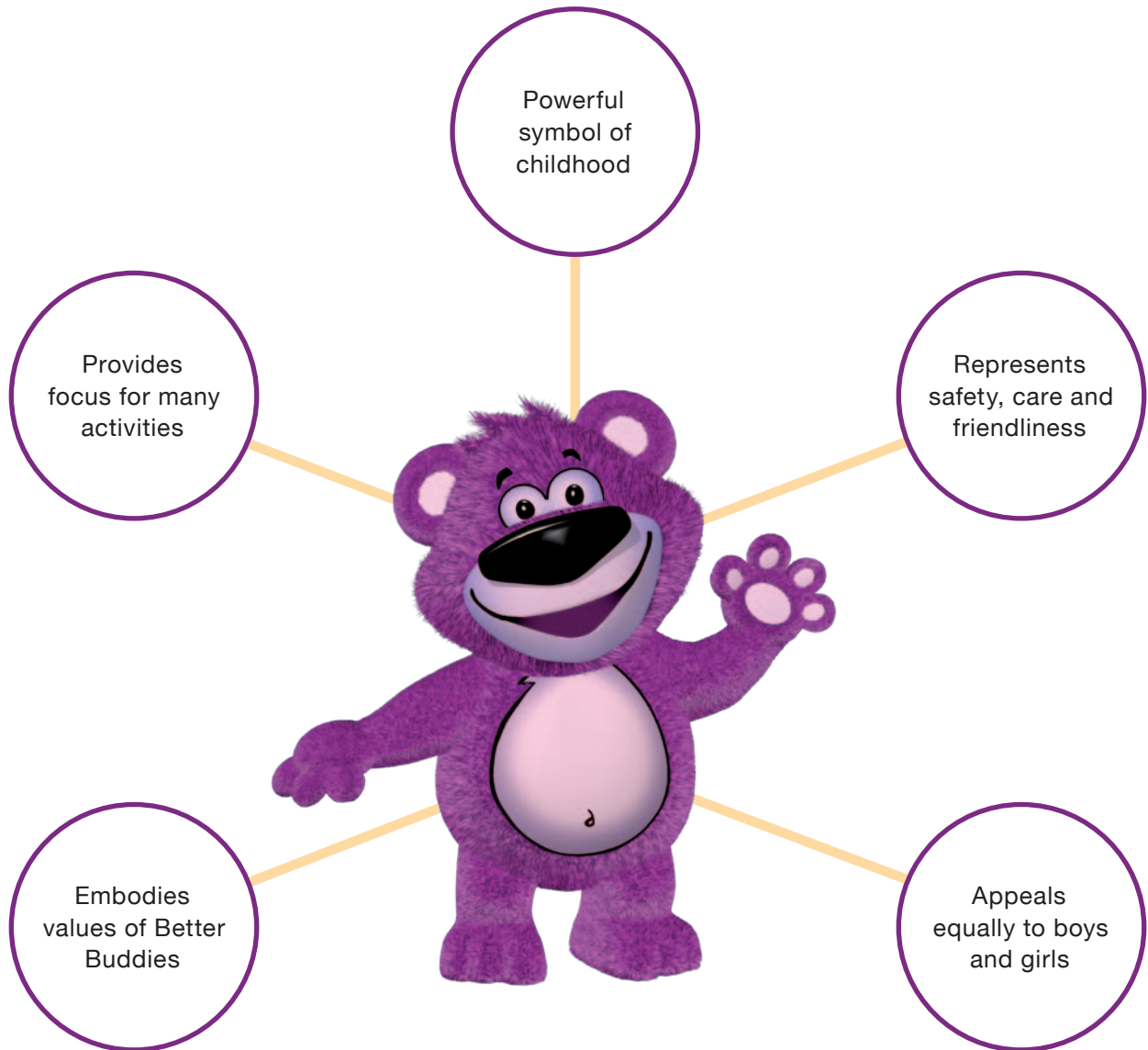
‘The power of the bear’

Buddy Bear is the mascot of Better Buddies and represents feelings of safety, warmth, comfort and being cared for.

Buddy promotes and embodies Alannah Mikac’s message of caring for others, symbolically supporting children’s transition and orientation to school, and gives Better Buddies special focus and meaning. In many cultures teddy bears are still a powerful and emotive symbol of childhood, and they are familiar playmates for most Australian children. Teddy bears can act as replacement ‘friends’, providing comfort and security, as they are perceived as warm, friendly, tolerant, accepting and compassionate. They also appeal equally to boys and girls. Buddy Bear can be used in a variety of ways and is featured in the classroom activities, and on the Better Buddies website.



Figure 2 – Why Buddy Bear?





SECTION

2

PLANNING







SECTION 2: PLANNING

Getting started with the Better Buddies journey

We emphasise the importance of the planning stage of the Better Buddies implementation process and have designed this checklist, as a guide, to help you on your journey. It can be adapted to suit your own school's environment. The checklist allows for the growth of Better Buddies in your school, can be used to drive continuous improvement of the program, and will direct your focus at the beginning of each new school year. You can find the full, three-stage checklist in the login section of the Better Buddies website.

	Planning
Governance	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal and Leadership team committed to Better Buddies. <input type="checkbox"/> Appoint Better Buddies Coordinator. <input type="checkbox"/> Establish Better Buddies Student Leadership Team, including Buddy Leaders and support teachers and/or wellbeing staff.
Professional Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Audit staff skills, knowledge and understanding of the issue of bullying and behaviour management. Ensure staff understand bullying is a relationship issue that needs relationship solutions through positive prevention and cultural change (provided in the Better Buddies Framework).
Policies and Procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify how the Better Buddies Framework can be incorporated into, or used to enhance, existing initiatives (including existing buddy programs, cross-age activities and explicit teaching of rights, responsibilities, social and emotional skills). This can start simply and be built on year to year. <input type="checkbox"/> Review wellbeing policies and procedures and ensure they include Better Buddies.
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide staff, students, parents and the school community with information about Better Buddies (e.g. on school website, in newsletter, information booklets and sessions).
Program Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Timetable Better Buddies sessions, including time for buddies to reflect, weekly or fortnightly. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide training to older buddies and appoint Buddy Leaders. <input type="checkbox"/> Match older buddies with younger buddies, taking into account 'at risk' students and those with special needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Include Better Buddies key events in school calendar. Incorporate them into school activities such as the welcome orientation to the school.
Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule time for staff and students to discuss and informally evaluate Better Buddies throughout the year (in terms of engagement etc.). Be sure to schedule time for teachers, students and parents to be involved in online evaluation of Better Buddies.



The planning process

Good planning underpins the successful implementation of any organisational change and supports the introduction of Better Buddies to your school. Better Buddies might seem to involve only students of certain year levels, but it is worthwhile considering it as a whole-school effort.

In order for the framework to operate successfully, the whole school community needs to:

- be committed to improving wellbeing as a priority
- understand the role of the Better Buddies in achieving cultural change
- be familiar with Better Buddies and how it works.

Show the Better Buddies PowerPoint and video at a staff meeting, to your School Council and to existing and prospective parents. These resources can be accessed via the Better Buddies website.

Ensure all members of the leadership team are committed to the introduction of Better Buddies

Research shows that initiatives like Better Buddies are more successful when they are adopted by all members of the school's community, including school leaders, teachers, ancillary and support staff, casual relief staff, parents, school council, and other members of the local community (McGrath, 2006).

Commitment of the leadership team to any school program is one of the most important ways to ensure it succeeds. When school leaders are not fully committed to changes or initiatives undertaken by the school, problems arise including failure to provide sufficient encouragement or advice, not acting to resolve issues, not working to establish conditions for teacher commitment, and not understanding that the innovation requires constant support. Schools can also experience administrative blockers such as timetable inflexibility or lack of resources.

Take the time to talk about the connection between the implementation of buddy systems, a reduction in bullying and the development of safe, friendly school environments. Acknowledge the commitment your school is making to promote pro-social values and work towards reducing bullying behaviours. Direct staff to the Teachers section of the Better Buddies website.

Achieving cultural change

Although many schools rely on short-term programs, these are not very effective in achieving cultural change. Research confirms that school-based programs intended to promote values and pro-social behaviours and to combat bullying and other violent acts, are most successful when they involve the whole school in relation to:

- curriculum
- pedagogy
- structures and policies
- procedures and rules
- funding priorities
- decision-making arrangements
- behaviour management and disciplinary procedures
- community relations
- wellbeing and pastoral care (Stanley, 2010).



Use a whole-school approach

Once you have successfully implemented your buddy system with the younger and older students, your school can look at ways to build other buddy relationships across the remainder of the school e.g. cross-age, multi-age and/or peer support opportunities for all your other students and members of the school community. Modules and ideas to help you do this are available in the login section of the Better Buddies website.

Include Better Buddies in policies and programs

If programs are to work successfully and be sustainable, they need to be embedded within the curriculum and daily life of the school and not just added on. Policies, procedures and teacher behaviour should all be consistent with the school's values.

Timetable buddy sessions

Buddy systems that operate well incorporate the use of a structured situation, where buddy sessions are timetabled to occur regularly. A commitment needs to be made to schedule buddy classroom and non-classroom sessions and work hard to stick to that schedule in order for your students to get the most out of their buddy experience. Unless buddy sessions are regularly time-tabled – weekly or fortnightly is ideal – it is easy for them to be neglected or subsumed in a mass of conflicting priorities, and the Better Buddies Framework suffers or disappears as a result.

Nominate a Coordinator for the Better Buddies Framework

We strongly recommend that schools appoint a Better Buddies Coordinator to serve both as an organiser within the school and as a contact person for the Better Buddies team at The Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

The capacities of the coordinator would include commitment, organisational capability and the ability to lead, motivate and manage teams of people. The role could be allocated to a teacher who is currently part of your leadership structure, one who has the potential to undertake leadership roles, or simply to someone with enthusiasm for the role. Ideally, the Better Buddies Coordinator is someone who will be teaching in the grade area your buddy students will come from. It does not matter whether the coordinator is involved with the older or younger Buddies, but it does help if it is someone who will be participating in the classroom buddy program. Alternatively, the Better Buddies coordinator can be from the wellbeing or welfare team within the school.

It is important that this person is given a time allocation for the various aspects of their role, such as liaising with parents, sending out letters, writing articles for the newsletter, processing photos, mounting displays, preparing activities, sourcing equipment, coordinating volunteers and organising training.

You can enter your Better Buddies Coordinator's details on the restricted Teachers section of the Better Buddies website and can update them by emailing the Better Buddies Team.

Appoint a Better Buddies Coordinator Buddy

In the spirit of buddies working together and supporting each other, it can also be helpful to nominate a Better Buddies Coordinator Buddy to provide support, balance the partnership and provide representation across the school. This could be someone involved in the other buddy grade area – i.e. if the coordinator works with the older buddies, the Coordinator's Buddy might work with the younger buddies. Details for the Better Buddies Coordinator Buddy can also be viewed on the restricted Teachers section of the Better Buddies website and updated by emailing the Better Buddies Team.



Encourage teachers and other adults to model appropriate behaviour

Do all adults in the school community model the sorts of respectful, inclusive, accepting, empathic and friendly behaviours they encourage in their students? (Sometimes this has to happen regardless of individual teachers' personal values.)

Encourage positive teacher–student relationships

'Good' teachers have a positive relationship with students. Less bullying occurs in classes where:

- students are engaged in learning
- teachers respect, care for, monitor and intervene to support students
- teachers believe in the importance of reducing bullying which means they are willing to implement new initiatives (McGrath, 2006).

A range of activities have been provided for teachers to use with students over the forty weeks of the school year. These are pedagogically sound and include games, lunchtime activities and fun! (See Sections 5 and 6.) Students are also encouraged to develop and trial their own activities for their younger buddies.

Getting staff on board

New initiatives can sometimes create problems by disrupting teachers' routines and programs. Staff can resist extra work or the notion of having to be part of a committee. It is important to structure the framework so that teachers are not burdened with extra work. Better Buddies is designed to be flexible and to fit in with what the school is already doing. Keeping the school community informed about Better Buddies is important and can be done via newsletter items, community displays of student work and so on.

Identify the buddy year levels

You will need to decide which year levels will participate in Better Buddies and what process your school will use to select and match Buddies. Buddy systems that operate well feature at least a three-year age difference between younger and older buddies. A principal aim of having buddies is to assist your new students in the transition to primary school.

Training a whole year level and pairing students with a whole year level of entering students is one very effective way to organise the Better Buddies Framework. Different methods of choosing buddies can include:

- whole year level (recommended)
- selected from teacher nominations
- self-selected
- chosen from school leaders and student counsellors
- student-nominated
- a combination of the above.

Selection and self-selection each pose difficulties: selecting only students known for their high levels of achievement, such as school captains or other student leaders, can undermine the credibility of the framework with other students, who may see it as not being of relevance to them.

Self-selection is more suitable for older students but can create problems. Gender balance is desirable and it appears from the research literature that boys are more inclined to opt out.

When you first begin, match up buddy groups you think are more likely to work well together in order to support the successful implementation of Better Buddies. You can then expand Better Buddies into other areas of the school, with support from enthusiastic participants who have experienced and enjoyed its benefits.



Match individual buddies

Once you've decided which year levels will be involved, consider how you will match specific buddies. Timetable this process into a meeting later in the year, or at a time when next year's class lists are finalised, to ensure it is not forgotten and those involved in Better Buddies will be able to participate.

Match buddy students carefully, giving special consideration to any at-risk students or students with special needs. Make sure you thoroughly brief the supportive buddy about this buddy relationship and why they have been chosen as a supportive buddy.

Train the older buddies

Better Buddies features a specific training program for older buddies that can be implemented by teachers within the school.

It is incorrect to assume that children naturally understand what being a buddy involves. For younger students, having a buddy can make a significant difference to the ease with which they transition into school.

Training students to be buddies is also important because being an older buddy is a very responsible leadership role and not all children naturally understand what being a buddy involves. Training for both older and younger buddies keeps them informed, reduces any unnecessary anxiety and lets them know what to expect.

Older students are taught the skills needed to be an effective buddy: how to deal with problems that might arise and also about the limitations of their role, and younger buddies are provided with a simple introductory session. It is important that buddies know the boundaries of their roles to minimise problems that could develop during the course of the year.

Ensure that staff involved in the Better Buddies program have trained the older buddies and younger buddies before the end of the previous school year, and conduct a refresher at the beginning of the new school year.

Throughout the training, students can revisit important social skills that help them in their own lives. Student Training sessions can be found in Section 5 and can be adapted to suit your individual school environment.

The value of Buddy Leaders

The Better Buddies Framework developed the idea of Buddy Leaders to help address problems associated with buddy systems. One of the weaknesses of buddy systems is their failure to provide a back-up plan for student absence. Younger buddies are easily disappointed when their older buddy is away, and Buddy Leaders can prevent this from happening. They can also provide planning support and help students to reflect on the time spent with their buddy.

In the Buddy Leader model, older students are placed in groups of four. If one member of the group is away, the others take turns to be buddy to the younger child. This helps to prevent attachments forming with a single replacement buddy. If the replacement is over a long period it has the potential to upset the smooth running of the program.

Being a Buddy Leader is a very responsible leadership role and can help students to feel valued, teach important social skills, and create a caring ethos in the school. Providing a forum for students to debrief and participate in decision-making around Better Buddies activities further enhances the benefits and desired outcomes of your program. You can do this by establishing a Better Buddies Student Leadership Committee. By timetabling sessions for such a committee to meet, students can work with teachers to plan, prepare and run buddy activities over the year. Some schools also ask Buddy Leaders, who are distinguished by wearing purple bands or vests, to help students during break times.



At different intervals over the year allow time for students to reflect

We have created resources to help students reflect on their role of being a buddy and determine ways they can improve. They can use the 'Older Buddy Reflection Sheet' (see page 55) during these sessions. This reflection can be done as a quiet activity and then shared with the group, possibly in a circle. This can be part of older buddies' leadership opportunities.

Evaluate effectiveness

Increasingly, schools use evaluation to drive their improvements. If you are introducing a new program, it would be valuable to gather some baseline data that helps depict your school's current status. This should be in relation to factors such as student wellbeing, levels of bullying, or orientation and transition programs you would like to address with Better Buddies.

Collecting data now will enable you to make comparisons once you have begun implementing Better Buddies. This can be linked with data you already collect in your school.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has developed the Better Buddies Evaluation process for all the Better Buddies schools, to help collect important data and provide information to continually enhance the framework. Please plan for your school's involvement in the Better Buddies Evaluation in Term 4 each year.



SECTION

3

IMPLEMENTATION







SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION

The following checklist will act as a guide to help you implement Better Buddies in your school. However the flexible framework has been carefully designed to minimise workload and can be implemented in a way that best meets the needs of your school. It should fit neatly into what you are already doing and complement or enhance existing buddy systems and other initiatives you may be undertaking. The checklist provides some structure and implementation ideas so that schools that are new to Better Buddies can build on what they have done in the planning stage.

	Implementing
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Principal and Leadership team continue to support Better Buddies (e.g. through involvement in activities and providing information to the wider school community). <input type="checkbox"/> Better Buddies Coordinator provides support to teachers and students and plans a Better Buddies event that aligns with your school's goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Better Buddies Student Leadership Team meets regularly to share achievements and challenges.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff have professional development opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in areas such as bullying, behaviour management, values-based learning etc.
Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Time is made in the curriculum for all students to be taught about rights, responsibilities, social and emotional skills and bullying. <input type="checkbox"/> The school's wellbeing policies reflect Better Buddies values and teachers' respectful behaviour model in their everyday practice, and incidents of bullying/harassment/abuse are recorded and tracked.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Inform the school community about Better Buddies using the newsletter, the school website and local media, and involve the school community in information sessions and invitations to Better Buddies key events. Share a story (including photos) with the Better Buddies Team to promote the school on the Better Buddies website and newsletter.
Program Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Older and younger buddies meet regularly to complete activities across the curriculum and have time to reflect on their learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Hold a welcome for buddies at the beginning of the year. <input type="checkbox"/> Hold a celebration for buddies at the end of the year, focusing on orientation and transition of new students and older buddies. <input type="checkbox"/> Hold one of the Better Buddies Key Events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Games > National Buddy Day > Book Week.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers, students and parents complete an online evaluation of Better Buddies (e.g. during November or after reporting schedule). Ask for feedback on their journey so far and any suggestions they can offer.



Let's get started

The Better Buddies Coordinator and Coordinator Buddy

Appoint a coordinator and coordinator buddy. They should be selected before the end of the year, as their role to implement the framework begins before transition occurs and when the timetable for the following year is being planned.

Timetabling issues

For the buddy program to be successful, buddy sessions should be included without too much disruption to the learning program. This can be achieved by identifying timetabling issues early, pre-planning activities and gathering materials required for the first few weeks.

Buddy training

Ensure that student training has been held at the end of the previous year. Run the refresher training activity at the beginning of the new school year.

Student orientation and transition

Transition and orientation activities for incoming students are a vital starting point for buddy relationships. They are an opportunity to introduce the concept of buddies to the new students and their parents. It is also the time to begin training the next group of older buddies. Transition activities provide an important leadership opportunity for the next group of older buddies, as they can become involved in supporting the new students in their orientation, talk with parent groups and assist with school tours and student movement around the school.

For younger students, having a buddy eases their transition to school and we have included a short session as part of Section 5 'Student Training' for the younger buddies, because these students often feel uncertain about what a being a buddy involves and what they will be expected to do. .

It is important to run the initial orientation session for the younger buddies as close to the beginning of school as possible. These sessions need to be timetabled so teachers of both classes understand the procedure if neither of them is the Coordinator or Coordinator Buddy.

When undertaking the training sessions, older students can revisit important social skills that will also help in their own lives. The training provides opportunities for student input into planning activities for their younger buddies and gives students increased ownership of the buddy process.

Communicating about Better Buddies

At the beginning of the school year, inform the staff, parents and wider community about the Better Buddies program. Discuss the connections between strong relationships, wellbeing, enhanced academic success and reductions in bullying. Also highlight the issue in the school newsletter and e-newsletter as well as the school website. This is a great activity for student involvement, where the older buddies can collect stories, photos and work samples to be placed in your newsletter and on your school's website.

You can download a website button from the Teacher login section of the Better Buddies website.

Once your students have completed Better Buddies you can download Better Buddies certificates for them.

Many local newspapers will run an item about students beginning school and this is a good opportunity to contact the local media to see if this is on their agenda. For assistance with media opportunities please refer to page 112.



The first day

On the first day of school, buddy activities should be planned to include buddy year levels, teachers and parents. Include a welcome activity in the first week.

Buddy Key Events

Better Buddies Key Events (Games, Book Week and Celebration) are held each term over the school year, supported by The Better Buddies Team. More ideas and details are available in Better Buddies Key Events (Section 7). Your school should include at least one Better Buddies Key Event during the first year and build in new Key Events each year.

Volunteers

Use the information in Section 8 'Involving the community' to guide your thinking about getting parents and other community members on board, as part of your Better Buddies implementation. Working with local volunteers provides valuable opportunities to develop new and existing relationships and also increase students' feelings of belonging within the community.

Evaluation

If Better Buddies is new to your school it will be valuable to gather some baseline data that helps depict your school's current status in relation to student wellbeing, levels of bullying, orientation and transition. This will help identify factors you would like to address with Better Buddies.

Collecting data now will enable you to make comparisons once you have begun implementing Better Buddies.

Better Buddies also collects important data and we send an evaluation each year via email to review the effectiveness of the Better Buddies Framework.

Review relevant school policies

If a school is to adopt programs that address areas of need, all members of the school community have a significant part to play in the process. It is important to convey consistent messages throughout the curriculum, school structures, policy development and in relationships within the school and with parents and the wider community.

Anti-bullying policy

Ensure all staff members are aware of the importance of addressing bullying in the school environment. While the Better Buddies Framework is a very effective way of reducing overall bullying, there is still a need to recognise and address incidences of bullying in a timely and consistent manner, and for school policies and procedures to reflect this.

Wellbeing and relationships

Proactive strategies focus on building relationship-based cultures in which wellbeing is a priority. The Better Buddies Framework provides support for teachers to explicitly teach children the vital social skills of friendship, support and empathy and encourages them to help other children. It is important to review your school's policies to ensure this approach is reflected. An updated version of the policies must be communicated to, and actioned by, all members of the school community. The Better Buddies values can act as an excellent 'checklist' to help schools evaluate their policies and procedures.

If programs don't fit with the school values, aren't given timetable space, and aren't part of relevant policies, they are unlikely to be sustainable. One-off programs consume financial and human resources, and when they fail, can make teachers cynical about dedicating time, money and energy to new ones.



Ensure staff are aware of the importance of addressing bullying in the school environment

While the Better Buddies Framework is a very effective way of reducing overall bullying, there is still a need to recognise and address incidences of bullying in a timely and consistent way. The National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB), an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, provides information about bullying that you can use in your school community. These resources are available on the NCAB website at www.ncab.org.au/forschools/



SECTION

4

SUSTAINING





SECTION 4: SUSTAINING

This checklist will help you build onto your Better Buddies Framework to enrich the experience for your students and teachers, continue to enhance wellbeing and academic success and extend the values and concept to the wider school community. You will however need to revisit the planning and implementing stages each year as you welcome new students. You can find the full three-stage checklist in the Login section of the Better Buddies website.

	Sustaining
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal and Leadership team continue to support and help review Better Buddies, using information from the school community's evaluations. Look for other relationship opportunities in the school and community. Better Buddies Coordinator helps to review program and leads its improvement and expansion in the school. Better Buddies Student Leadership Team continues to meet to establish ways to improve and expand Better Buddies.
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff continues professional development plans to increase their understanding of bullying and use their existing skills and knowledge of buddy programs and values-based learning to be a buddy for another staff member.
Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum focused on rights, responsibilities, social and emotional skills and bullying is documented, reviewed and improved. Review incidents of bullying/harassment/abuse that have been recorded, identify any patterns and develop preventative strategies. Build preventative strategies such as Buddy mentors in the playground, Better Buddies Bus Stop or Friendship Seat so all students have a safe place to be.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact local media and The Alannah and Madeline Foundation with stories about Better Buddies. Identify links with other community organisations (e.g. libraries, Rotary, sporting clubs, retirement villages etc.) and approach them to be involved in Better Buddies. Include the Buddy Bear mascot in school promotion and enrolment advertising.
Program Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take things slowly but look for ways to expand Better Buddies to include more students in the school (e.g. pair other students with a teacher buddy, secondary school students etc.). Look at enriching activities such as Be My Buddy and Buddies For Wildlife. Involve older buddies as speakers at school tours, orientation and open day events for the school to promote Better Buddies. Older buddies write and post letters to their younger buddies ready for the new school year. Review Better Buddies key events. Add more events to the calendar or find more ways for the community to be involved in, or build on, existing events.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review formal evaluation data from Better Buddies and use the information to make improvements to the program in your own school.



Key elements for sustaining Better Buddies in your school

We encourage all schools to use Better Buddies, each school year, to support the new students and provide leadership opportunities to the older students.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has developed a guide (see Section 8 'Involving the Community') to help you implement and sustain Better Buddies. This involves engaging volunteers from your school and wider community to be involved in and assist with Better Buddies activities. Working with local volunteers provides valuable opportunities to develop relationships and increase students' feelings of belonging within their community.

You can also use the Better Buddies Key Events as a focus to provide opportunities to build other buddy relationships with students and involve parents, grandparents, carers and other volunteers. Once you develop relationships with community organisations, you may wish to turn a Better Buddies event into a community event. Hold a Better Buddies picnic on the weekend or at twilight to include community helpers and promote your school.

Community partnerships can offer students:

- valuable relationships with caring adults – mentors, volunteers and family involvement
- an awareness of resources available in the wider community
- an opportunity to learn new skills through volunteers
- a forum for acceptance of cultural difference through international clubs via food, sport, dress, customs, music and art
- the opportunity to develop their communication skills by working with volunteers
- an opportunity for students to present information to authentic audiences
- a chance to give back to the community.

Buddies across the whole school

Think about ways to engage other students (i.e. those not participating in the buddy program) in the school by matching them with a buddy for special sessions and regular times over the school year. Many schools have introduced this concept and have come up with their own title for this group. The non-traditional buddies may be support 'buds', 'mates', or 'friends'. These groups build different buddy relationships within the school using the Better Buddies values.

Parent buddies

Think about creating a buddy system matching new parents with current parents in your school. You can help facilitate a morning tea to introduce parents and pair them up, suggesting they exchange email addresses and phone numbers to connect with each other.

Teacher/student buddies

Many young people do not have a significant adult in their life whom they can connect with. Teacher/student buddy relationships are a positive way to address this. Match every staff member, including admin staff, with an older student. Include time to touch base with each other briefly each day and twice a term maybe have lunch together. This can be supplied by the adult or be a shared lunch to which each contributes. This connection provides a support network for all students and opens the way for communication and support for them during the year. This can be particularly important as the older students prepare for transition to secondary school.



Buddies in the community

Involving your students in the wider school community provides strong connections and different relationships for your students to experience. Some schools have introduced 'oldie' buddies by connecting with residents at their local retirement village. Others have created a buddy system with a local community organisation such as the local police station, library or council by displaying art work, buddy displays, sculptures and other school projects. If you have a retirement village nearby, log into the Better Buddies website and use the module developed for this called 'Be My Buddy'.

Keep checking our website

The Better Buddies website is constantly updated with new modules, activities and ideas from Better Buddies schools all around the country. Just use your school's login to access a wealth of resources to sustain and enrich Better Buddies at your school. And don't forget to share your ideas with the Better Buddies team at betterbuddies@amf.org.au

Local media

Involving the media can raise the profile of your school and acknowledge the efforts of buddies and adults. Please refer to the Media section of the Better Buddies website for more information and resources to help you with local media.

You can use the Key Events or special times of the year such as orientation and transition to invite the local media to profile your school in the local paper. National Buddy Day or special events at the school are always well received by the media. Make sure you take clear, high resolution photos of events just in case the media cannot do so themselves. Remember to make sure students have the appropriate media release signed before including them in any photographs.





SECTION

5

STUDENT TRAINING





SECTION 5: STUDENT TRAINING

Introduction to training

Why train?

It is important to train students to be buddies, as it is incorrect to assume that children naturally understand what is involved with being a buddy.

For older students, training reinforces the responsibility that comes with being a buddy and helps to revisit important social skills that will help in their own lives as well as those of their buddies. The training sessions also provide an opportunity for students to have input into planning activities, giving them increased ownership of the buddy program.

For younger students, the short information session helps to ease their transition to school and relieves any uncertainty they may have about their role in the buddy program.

Games are an important part of the student training as they help to lighten up buddy sessions and make things fun. We have provided these so that students will see the buddy training, and the program in general, as enjoyable.

When to train

The training is designed to be conducted in the last term of school and should be delivered over four 45-60 minute sessions, but can be modified to suit your needs.

At the beginning of each school year a refresher session should also be conducted.

Selecting Buddies

Selecting your student buddies

Buddies will work as a pair – one older buddy to one younger buddy. It is important to choose buddies carefully.

Due to the differences between buddy systems in schools, the ways in which the matching process operates will have many variations. Buddies might visit kindergartens or preschools for the matching process to take place, or buddies might be selected before these visits are made. Another option is to introduce the older and younger buddies at the school's orientation day.

We recommend that students do not choose brothers or sisters, other family members, or close friends. Younger buddies who have any sort of disability will need careful allocation, and the older buddy will need special briefing and additional training.



Selecting Buddy Leader groups

Buddy Leaders are students who support older buddies and can step in if the older buddy is away or leaves the school. Buddy Leader groups consist of approximately four students who operate on a rotating basis to step in if required. It is important to select Buddy Leader groups carefully, so they are relatively balanced in gender, ability and strengths.

The groups will provide support for the older buddies in all sorts of ways:

- sharing ideas
- planning and developing activities
- supervising activities
- organising equipment
- being the replacement buddy if one of the group is away
- providing a forum for reflection.

If you are uncertain how well the children will work together, consider having a trial period before making the groups permanent.

Why have Buddy Leaders?

One weakness of some buddy systems is their failure to provide a back-up plan for student absence. Younger buddies are easily disappointed when their older buddy is away. Buddy Leaders will help prevent this problem.

It is important to allow the students to express concerns and solve any problems that arise from being a buddy, possibly in team meetings of the Buddy Leaders, which would regularly take place after buddy sessions.

Running Buddy Leader debriefing groups

Buddies will want to share things that happened during the buddy session and may wish to talk about concerns that have arisen. The school also needs to keep an eye on the progress of the older buddies, assess how the program is proceeding and monitor any emerging concerns or problems.

To provide structure for this, we have created resources to guide the students in reflecting on their progress. They can use the 'Older Buddy Reflection Sheet' (see page 55) during this session. This can be done as a quiet activity and then shared with the group, possibly in circle time. Students can rotate the following roles for these meetings:

- Gofer – collects the sheets and any display books in which they are filed, then returns updated books at the end.
- Timekeeper – monitors how long people are taking to fill in their sheets, and ensures the discussion keeps moving and finishes on time.
- Social skills coach – ensures everybody takes his or her turn in the discussion, that the 'no putdown rule' is strictly adhered to and that nobody monopolises the conversation.
- Reporter – summarises the group's discussion to the whole class.

The teacher hears any concerns expressed in these forums and can encourage those students with more serious concerns to discuss them privately.



Emergencies

Students must know that they can speak privately with their teacher should any problems arise with their younger buddy. They must be briefed to speak up immediately if any of the following issues arises:

- something they are told makes them feel uncomfortable
- the younger buddy is interfering with their own life at school
- there is bullying or harassment
- the younger buddy has problems the older buddy feels they are unable to help with.

Expectations and boundaries

Buddies need to know the boundaries of their role so that problems don't develop during the course of the program.

Relationship boundaries

Older buddies need to understand the nature of their relationship with the younger buddy – it is a befriending and mentoring relationship, not a traditional friendship.

Problem boundaries

Older buddies need to know that there will be problems they won't be able to solve and difficulties they will need assistance with. They need to be taught to communicate about any difficulties with their younger buddies and teachers in an appropriate and timely manner. They also need to be reassured that, just because there might be problems or difficulties, they have not failed.

Buddy Leaders extension

Buddy Leaders can also be used in other activities in the school, including forming a Better Buddies Student Leadership Committee. If your school provides activities at lunch time, Buddy Leaders can be selected on a rotational basis to 'supervise' these activities. The Student Leadership Committee could also help plan and organise the Better Buddies Key Events. Buddy Leaders could also assist in the playground and wear purple vests or wrists bands so they are identifiable to other students.



Session 1: What is a buddy?

This session is designed to introduce the older buddies to their role. Buddy Leaders are taken from within the older buddies group so they can take the place of any buddy who is absent during Better Buddies activities.

Resources

A large photocopied outline of Buddy Bear (page 99).

The students are placed into groups of four for this session, so that they can work in the Buddy Leader groupings they will be in for the rest of the year.

Introducing the program

Discuss with the children 'What is the Better Buddies Framework about?'

- what your role as a buddy involves
- what you'll get out of it
- what you'll give to your younger buddy.

Discuss important points such as:

- older children are there to support younger ones to help them feel comfortable at school
- older children are given a chance to be school leaders
- older and younger students need to work together so they both develop skills and have a positive experience
- have fun and make the school an enjoyable, happy place where everyone can feel safe and cared for.

Games

'Great north wind'

This is a game where the group sits on chairs in a circle around a person standing in the middle who says, 'The great north wind blows for people who like strawberry ice cream'. Everyone who likes strawberry ice cream gets up and changes chairs. Because there is one chair less than there are people, the person who is last stands in the middle and says... 'The great north wind blows for people who like ...' etc.

'What are the qualities of a good buddy?'

In cooperative groups, students brainstorm: 'What are the qualities of a good buddy?' (Give students 10 minutes and then get them to report to the group.) For example, friendly, kind, inclusive etc.

Buddies need to know that they should be aware of their responsibilities as role models, and should model appropriate behaviour at all times. They should:

- treat their younger buddies with respect at all times
- participate in all activities to the best of their ability
- express any concerns they are having to their classroom teacher
- accept their responsibilities
- wear the correct school uniform and follow the school rules.

Students discuss their answers with the class, and the teacher writes these points on the picture of Buddy (page 99) photocopied onto an A3 sheet (or make your own larger version). Make sure you put this aside; it will be brought out and used again in the refresher session next year.



‘Buddies alphabet’

Everyone sits in a circle. The teacher writes a phrase such as ‘Buddy Bear is great’, or ‘buddies are great mates’ on the board. Using the letters of each word, going round the circle, each student says a positive affirmation. For example – beaut, understanding, delightful, doing, young.

Buddy Leaders

Teacher introduces topic.

What is a Buddy Leader?

A member of a support group of four students who helps you be a buddy and takes your place if you’re away.

Why do we have Buddy Leaders?

So that the children always have a buddy, know their replacement buddy, and always feel secure and safe.

A Buddy Leader:

- supports your group
- helps your friends
- shares ideas
- helps organise equipment and activities
- stands in if one of your Buddy group is away
- helps solve problems if they arise.

Allocate Buddy Leader groups of four

Teacher has decided these groups in advance, so students can:

- recap general expectations of being a buddy and ask questions
- finish this session with a game.

Possible questions

- When do I get my buddy? (Next year.)
- Who chooses them? (Teachers usually choose them – this is up to the individual school, however.)
- How often will we be doing activities in class with our buddies? (Once a week, once a fortnight, once a month, up to the school.)
- What will I do with my buddy? (We will go over this in a later session.)



Session 2: How can I be a good buddy?

Resources

Blackline master, Buddy Befriending and Friendship (see page 53)

Games resources (if needed). Enlarge these on the photocopier if so desired.

Recap last session

Students in Buddy Leader groups engage in a cooperative game.

Check Bounce Back!, Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms.

How will I be a buddy?

From the following list, give children two ideal behaviours for a buddy to use. Students then come up with five of their own.

Run a 'Multiply and Merge' activity

Children work separately to develop a list of five good ways for a buddy to act. They then join with another person and decide which five ideas, from their combined ten, are the best. Then they join with another pair to repeat the process. After they have the final list of five, they share with the whole class. They can also explain the processes they went through to negotiate their final list. If children don't come up with the full list during the debriefing, fill in the rest. You could consider role-playing some of these behaviours with the students.

Ideal buddy behaviours:

- active listening
- being empathic
- negotiating
- cooperating
- being positive
- sharing
- taking turns
- including others
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- being kind
- paying attention to your buddy.

Teacher writes down responses and compiles a class list of desirable behaviours.

Teacher briefly discusses behaviours to avoid.



Problem behaviours:

- putdowns
- blaming
- interrupting
- finishing someone's sentences
- expressing contempt
- avoiding your share of the work
- hoarding resources
- excluding
- bullying behaviours.

Teacher explains that being an ideal older buddy doesn't mean buying their younger buddy's affection.

Game

'Copy Cats'

One person is 'it'. He or she slips out of the room. Teacher chooses 'the cat'. Everyone around the circle copies what the cat is doing (for example, clapping). Then the student who is 'it' is invited to walk around the circle and guess who the cat is. The cat discreetly changes the action (could be clicking the fingers, patting stomach). 'It' has three guesses.

The buddy relationship

Role and relationship boundaries

Students need to understand what is expected of a buddy, and what is not. They also need to understand the nature of their relationship with their younger buddy. That is, it is a befriending relationship and not a friendship.

Confidentiality and disclosure

Younger children will tell their older buddies things they should keep to themselves, but it's important for older children to disclose if they are told something that makes them fear for their younger buddy's safety or wellbeing.

Sometimes the buddy relationship will not go smoothly, and the older child needs to know that this is normal, and they can come to you if they are experiencing problems. Learning to improve through reflection is built into the Buddy Leader structure, and we suggest that a little time is built into buddy sessions to allow this to occur in a formal way using the reflection rubrics.

Some examples of points to discuss:

- being discreet about secrets
- telling the teacher if the buddy tells them something that worries them
- what to do if they are having problems being a buddy
- what to do if students express concerns about their competency as a buddy
- the power of reflection (learning to do it better next time)
- the 'Super Buddy' rubric (see page 56) – use it to improve buddy sessions and buddy relationships.



Game

‘Birth-date line’

This game is good for winding up the session. Without talking, everyone must try to get in a line that represents when they were born.

If more than one person was born in a particular month, they must use sign language to position themselves on the birth-date line, taking into consideration the day of the month. The teacher allocates the start of the line and the finish of the line and once everyone is in position, each one takes it in turn to say when they were born.



Session 3: What if? Questions, troubleshooting and role-plays

Resources

Photocopy scenario sheets on pages 73-74.

Teacher says:

Today we are looking at problems or difficulties that might arise between you and your buddy.

Put children in Buddy Leader groups

Distribute scenarios and role-play cards (pages 73-74). Have groups discuss what they would do in each scenario. Teacher moves between groups, listening and giving input where needed. Children swap scenario cards with other groups, repeat. Teachers can make up scenario cards.

Cards cover topics such as:

- my buddy doesn't like me
- I don't like my buddy
- the session doesn't go well
- I don't know enough
- my buddy hassles me too much
- I get impatient or angry with my buddy
- my buddy complains that I spend too much time with them.

Other questions that might arise are:

- What if my buddy's different to me? Discussion about differences. What is difference?
- Why do people want to be like others?
- What acceptance looks like (that is, how do I show acceptance to my buddy, especially if my buddy is different or has a disability?)

After groups are finished, teacher runs a whole-group discussion about solutions each group developed. Which are workable and why or why not?



Role-plays

These activities are designed to be workshopped and performed as role-plays by the students. If you have time, make them into cards and children can pick them randomly.

Teacher distributes cards to student pairs, who then role-play the scenario shown:

- I want to be able to play footy with my friends at lunchtime, but my buddy wants to play with me all the time – they won't leave me alone.
- I want to play with my buddy, but they don't want to play with me.
- My buddy doesn't get involved in the activities – I have to do all the work.
- My buddy keeps asking me to buy them things at the canteen.
- I feel frustrated when I'm working with my buddy.
- We are supposed to be colouring in an outline of Buddy Bear, but my younger buddy is colouring outside the lines, and using red for Buddy's fur.
- My buddy wants to come and play at my house after school.
- My buddy talks with a lisp and I can't always understand what they say.
- I overheard one of the other older buddies telling a younger buddy that Santa isn't real. What do I do?
- My buddy's friends also want to be my buddy.
- I am helping my buddy to learn the alphabet, but they keep getting the letters wrong.



Session 4: Planning for next year

Resources

Photocopied postcards (page 82)
Copies of questionnaire (page 57)
Certificate of completion (page 52)
Party items

Introduction

This session is interactive and students can be expected to have strong input to activities for orientation day and for sessions during the year.

- What activities would I like to share with my buddy?
Ten-minute brainstorm in Buddy Leader groups or whole group (to be kept by teacher to help with planning for later). Report back to the group. Teacher compiles list and discusses with class that activities must be feasible, cost-effective etc. Discussion about plans, what would work, what costs might be involved, etc.
- Postcard welcoming the beginning students to be filled in, ready to be sent in January.

Game

Everyone is sitting in a circle. A ball is thrown to a person opposite. The person's name is called out. The ball is then thrown to another person across the circle (never given to the person sitting beside). The pattern must be remembered because the game begins again. A second ball is introduced.

What will I do as a buddy?

Planning for orientation day. Show questionnaire, discuss with children how they will be involved in orientation at your school.

Plan welcome for younger buddies early in Term 1.

The older buddies might suggest suitable projects, but others, like the ones below (suggested by Year 6 students), can be used in this session:

- give all the students a balloon with a teddy face
- young buddies make a bear and older buddies assist with getting the materials ready
- have a teddy bear picnic with a room full of teddy bears. Have Teddy Bear biscuits™, Tiny Teddies™ and Iced Teddies™
- make a honey drink
- make teddy bear masks
- make a box from coloured card to put teddy bear goodies in
- make a teddy bear book to read to them.

Final questions and answers (see session 3, page 46)

Certificates of completion (page 52)



Refresher session

This session should be undertaken at the beginning of the following year.

Resources

Outline of Buddy Bear with the ideal behaviours filled in earlier.

Introduction

Refer to materials completed in sessions one and two:

- What is the ideal buddy (behaviours)?
- Using Buddy Leader groups: allocation of group members, how to work, responsibilities and so on.
- Differences
- Active listening
- The buddy relationship and its boundaries (recap and use 'buddy befriending and friendship' sheet, blackline master. (see page 53)
- What to do with sensitive information
- Troubleshooting – recall activity and reminder – what if it all goes horribly wrong?
- Simple, cooperative games to play with the younger buddies. Students learn games in Buddy Leader groups and teach students in other groups. This can lead to a 'Tabloid sports' session if desired. Students can also be encouraged to supervise lunchtime activities.
- Teacher reminds students of their activity ideas for the coming weeks.
- Presentation of badges or other identifiers if used.
- Go and meet buddies. You might like to choose one of the introductory activities or have morning tea if appropriate. If beginning students are each to have a Buddy Bear, this would be a good opportunity for older buddies to present them.



Special session: beginning students orientation to Better Buddies

From our research and talking to students, we've found that a small session discussing the buddy framework with beginning students reduces confusion and settles anxieties in the younger children about the role of buddies.

Introduction to the Framework

A discussion to inform beginning students about buddies – why we have buddies.

What is a buddy?

- A senior school student who will help you.

What will I do with my buddy?

- They will play with you.
- They will help you with your lessons.

When will I meet my buddy?

- Explain exactly when this will take place.

How often will I see my buddy?

- This will vary from school to school.

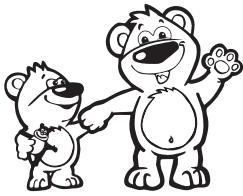
Talk to the beginning students about behavioural expectations

- Your buddy is your friend, but not your parent.
- It's great to play with your buddy, but not all the time.
- Big kids need time to themselves.
- You need to make friends with other beginning students.

Explain to beginning students that if they have problems, or feel uncomfortable, it's important for them to talk to you.

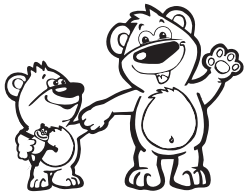
If students have questions or concerns, these can be addressed now.

The end of this session would be a good time to introduce the buddies to each other and run an introductory game or class activity such as 'Human Knots'.



CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS OF BUDDY GRADES

- ☐ Training is done for older buddies
- ☐ Training is done for younger buddies
- ☐ Buddy pairs are carefully selected
- ☐ Buddy Leader group structure is set up
- ☐ Buddy sessions are timetabled
- ☐ Buddy sessions include time for reflection
- ☐ Students play a key role in the development of activities
- ☐ I model caring and respectful behaviours at all times



Buddy Certificate

This is to certify that

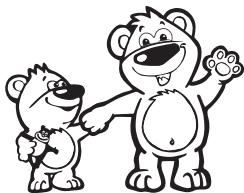
Has completed the Better Buddies Framework Training,
understands the requirements of being a buddy and is
qualified to be an older buddy.

Buddy _____

Principal _____

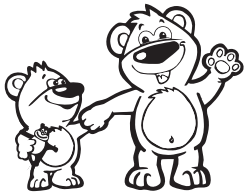
Class Teacher _____

Date _____



BEFRIENDING	FRIENDSHIP
A relationship that is supervised by teachers	You choose your friends
A relationship managed by the school and provided to help the buddy	Relationship formed through common interests or outlook, or common social circle
A relationship treated as a work commitment by the befriender	Formed naturally and on its own terms
Confidentiality rules are set by the school	Friends are usually from your own peer group
Relationship offering support, understanding, empathy, warmth to the buddy	Friendships can involve dependency and being there whenever needed
A non-personal relationship where the befriender keeps their distance	You can feel responsible for friends
Relationship can be artificial	Friends can give opinions and personal views with few restrictions
The befriender must avoid emotional involvement	Boundaries to the friendship are set informally, are often unspoken, and may change over time
A relationship of mutual respect where both parties are genuine	Friends can be emotionally attached and involved
The befriender is committed and responsible for their behaviour but is NOT responsible for the buddy	Friendships are formed gradually and can be long-term
Aims to empower the buddy and to develop independence and confidence	Friends can be flexible and are sometimes taken for granted
Offers stability, consistency and reliability to the buddy	Friendship involves loyalty and trust
A relationship of openness and honesty, but respecting personal boundaries	We invite friends into our lives and into our homes
Boundaries are formally defined either verbally or in writing	We put up with more from our friends

Adapted from B.E.S.T Buddies (Smith 2002)



YOUNGER BUDDY REFLECTION SHEET

Did you have a good time with your buddy today?



What did you like in your buddy session?

Was there anything you didn't like?

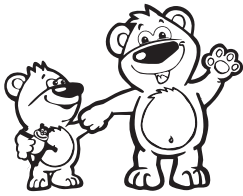


How do you think you can stop this happening again?

How do you think your buddy enjoyed this session?



Give one reason for your answer



OLDER BUDDY REFLECTION SHEET

What happened during the buddy session today that you felt worked well?

What was one thing you did that you felt didn't go so well?

How do you think you can stop this happening again?

On a scale of 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5, how do you think your buddy enjoyed this session? Circle a number.

Give one reason for your answer.

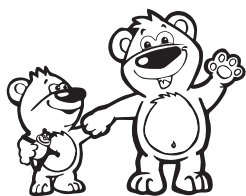
On a scale of 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5, how well did you enjoy the session? Circle a number.

Give a reason for your answer.

What are two things that could improve this activity next time?

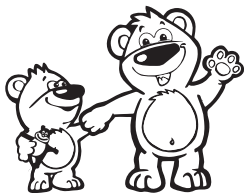
I would like to discuss some things about being a buddy with my teacher.

Yes/No



BEING A 'SUPER BUDDY' RUBRIC

When I was with my younger buddy, I:	Sometimes	Often	Every time
	☹	☺	😊
Used my buddy's name and greeted her or him			
Used a friendly voice			
Smiled!			
Remembered things my buddy told me last time			
Explained things carefully			
Checked to make sure my buddy understood			
Kept calm if my buddy didn't understand			
Used a variety of ways to explain tasks to my buddy			
Gave praise			
Didn't over-praise or praise inappropriately			
Asked my buddy questions			
Listened to answers			
Gave 'wait' time if my buddy made a mistake			
Helped my buddy when they made mistakes, without taking over or doing tasks			
Ignored my buddy's small mistakes			
Didn't teach too much or 'take over'			
Didn't 'talk down' or use putdowns			
Got my buddy back on task if she or he was distracted			
Wasn't bossy			
Enjoyed my time with my buddy			



GETTING TO KNOW MY BUDDY

What does my buddy like?	How do I know? (ask, observe, speak to teacher, parent, brother or sister)	✓	x
Reading stories?			
Drawing?			
Making things?			
Working with numbers?			
Animals?			
Pets?			
Dinosaurs?			
Computers?			
Playing in the sandpit?			
Running?			
Playing ball games?			
Painting or drawing?			
Making collages?			
Making papier-mâché?			
Talking?			
Playing with dolls or other toys?			
Cars?			
Making simple foods?			
Building?			
Making music?			
Computer games?			
Jigsaws?			
Singing?			
Listening to music?			
Watching TV?			



SECTION

6

BETTER BUDDIES CURRICULUM SUPPORT





SECTION 6: BETTER BUDDIES CURRICULUM SUPPORT

Introduction

In this section you will find a comprehensive range of activities to support the implementation of the Better Buddies framework in your school. The activities have been prepared by teachers for teachers with the Australian curriculum in mind. The activities are grouped under a curriculum focus, rather than specific learning areas, as many activities could be considered cross-curricular. The curriculum focuses are:

- Health and personal development (H&PD)
- Literacy (Lit)
- Numeracy (Num)
- Arts (Art)
- Science (Sc)
- Technology (Tech)

There is also a 'Just for fun' section with extra activities for older and younger buddies to enjoy together.

Buddy Bear should be included in lessons when possible and ideas for doing this have been provided with the activities where appropriate.

Many of the activities have accompanying activity sheets. Some are suitable for outdoors or during lunch breaks, and others require the assistance of volunteers. All this information, and more, can be found by referring to the codes next to the activity names in the contents list on pages 61-62. A key explaining each of the codes is provided below.

There is also an exciting letter writing interactive (available on the website) which can be used by students to write letters to each other. The interactive allows for the saving and printing of letters, but not emailing, as the aim is to teach students how to write a personal letter, address an envelope and post a letter. The activities associated with the interactive have the code 'I' next to them.



Key:

The following key explains the symbols that appear next to each lesson.

AS – lesson has an accompanying activity sheet

I – has an associated interactive on the Better Buddies website

L – appropriate as a lunchtime activity

V – may need the assistance of volunteers

O – suitable outdoor activity

e – connection to eSmart Schools provided (for more information about eSmart Schools see page 100)



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Health and personal development



H&PD 1 – All about me (key: I, e)

Older buddies create a PowerPoint slide show about themselves to be shared with their younger buddy then buddies work together to create an 'All about me' PowerPoint about the younger buddy. Older buddies teach the younger buddies how to add photos, video, sound, colour and movement to the presentation.

Buddies could also use the Better Buddies Letter Writing interactive (available on the website) to write letters to each other introducing themselves.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This is a fun way for children to get to know each other and the younger buddies begin to learn valuable computer skills.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children learn responsibility through teaching computer skills to their younger buddy, while also getting to know them.

eSmart Schools connection:

Younger buddies are learning valuable computer skills. Discussion should take place regarding uploading pictures/video to a computer, where these images are stored and who will have access to them.

H&PD 2 – Buddy play time (key: L, e)

Bring buddy classes together for a 'getting-to-know-you' session. Some ideas for activities include:

- children bring a favourite game or toy to share with their buddy
- organise lots of 'junior' activities such as dress-ups, play dough, home corner, shop, dolls, cars, train tracks for buddies to play together
- set up a board game circuit where buddies can play different board games together.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This is a fun way for children to practise the social skills involved in play such as sharing, taking turns and fair play.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children love to revisit activities from their past. It is a great opportunity for them to relax and play while modelling social behaviours such as fair play, sharing and taking turns.

eSmart Schools connection:

Buddies could share their favourite websites or play their favourite online games. Older buddies to reinforce appropriate web search and online gaming behaviours.



H&PD 3 – A buddy looks/sounds/acts/thinks like (key: AS)

Older and younger buddies discuss what a good buddy ‘looks like’, ‘sounds like’, ‘acts like’ and ‘thinks like’. Record responses on the activity sheet on page 71. Large cut outs of Buddy Bear could also be made and the suggestions written in and around them.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps children reflect on the buddy relationship and the skills necessary to be a good buddy.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps children reflect on the skills required to be a good buddy, as well as reinforcing their social competencies.



H&PD 4 – Recipe for a buddy (key: AS, e)

Discuss the characteristics that make a good buddy.

Children work with a buddy, in a small group or independently, to write a recipe for a buddy. The recipe should include an ingredients list (e.g. 1 cup of kindness, a spoonful of trust etc.) and a procedure (e.g. mix the cup of kindness with the spoonful of trust). Older buddies should model how this is done, then assist their younger buddy to write a recipe. Use completed recipes to make a ‘Recipe for a buddy’ book. A recipe template has been provided on page 72 for you to use or adapt.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps children reflect on friendship skills and what is necessary to be a buddy. Practice writing a procedural text from a model, while being supported by their older buddy.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps children to reflect upon friendship skills and what is necessary to be a friend and reinforces their social competencies.

eSmart Schools connection:

Search the internet for recipe websites. Together, buddies view how recipes are written and formulate a recipe template using word processing software.



H&PD 5 – Buddy meal (key: L, V, e)

Buddy classes come together to share a healthy meal – breakfast, lunch or afternoon tea. Older buddies could be responsible for deciding on menus, preparing shopping lists (possibly shopping) and basic food preparation. Then, buddies can eat together. Before organising the meal, discuss what the younger buddies like to eat. Use Buddy Bear to stimulate conversation. Sort the foods into ‘everyday’ and ‘sometimes’ food categories.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helping to prepare a meal with the older buddies gives the younger students a good opportunity to learn about healthy and enjoyable food and to enjoy a celebration with their older buddies.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children have a number of responsibilities in this activity. They are modelling various behaviours to the younger buddies, including healthy eating habits.

eSmart Schools connection:

Buddies view online recipe sites to find simple-to-prepare recipes that could be used for the shared meal. They could also write shopping lists and design and print menus for the occasion.



H&PD 6 – School values poster (key: e)

The children discuss the key values of the school and what they mean to them. Buddies then work together, or in small groups, to create posters depicting the school values. The posters could feature Buddy Bear in some way.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps the child understand values and identify with what the school values mean to them.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps the child to understand, articulate, and identify with the school values.

eSmart Schools connection:

Buddies can design their posters using digital software, then print and display them around the school. They could also upload examples to the school’s website or include them in the newsletter.



H&PD 7 – A handful of buddies (key: e)

Have a class discussion about the difference between being a friend and being friendly. Children work together to trace their hand onto coloured paper. On separate fingers, they write the name of a friend who:

- is in their grade
- is younger than them
- is older than them
- is a girl
- is a boy.

Older buddies can help younger buddies cut out their hand. Display the hands together in a line as if holding hands.

Now brainstorm ways to be friendly to someone you may not be friends with. Use an outline of Buddy Bear to record the responses.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This activity helps the younger children to think about the range of different friends they have and that these relationships can cross age and gender barriers.

Benefits for older buddy:

This activity helps the older children to think about the range of different friends they have and that these relationships can cross age and gender barriers.

eSmart Schools connection:

The discussion about the difference between being friends and being friendly may include a focus on online interactions. This will depend on the knowledge and age/s of the students in the group.



H&PD 8 – Buddies and the Perceptual Motor Program (key: O)

Older buddies can be put on a roster to help with the running of the junior Perceptual Motor Program (PMP).

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- organisation
- leadership
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

The PMP has lots of benefits for children, but it is labour intensive to set up and monitor. Many schools find it difficult to get enough parents to help. Having older students assist solves the problem of a lack of parents, as well as providing great role models for the younger children.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helping run the PMP gives older children a sense of responsibility and leadership and an opportunity to be role models for the younger children.



H&PD 9 – Tabloid sports (key: L, O)

In small groups (perhaps Buddy Leader groups), older buddies are responsible for designing and running a tabloid sports session for the younger buddies. Each group could be responsible for running one activity. Younger buddies are put into groups of approximately four. These groups then rotate around the activities.

Note: Activities should be skills-based; they need to be simple and should only run for about five minutes.

Some ideas include:

- bean bag toss into a hoop
- fly swat or balloon tennis
- handball competition
- soccer-style dribbling around cones
- climbing over and under equipment
- balancing a bean bag on head while walking
- long jump
- skipping
- ball bouncing
- gymnastics ribbons
- playing musical statues
- spinning hoops
- tunnel ball
- balance beam.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger children benefit by playing cooperative games which older children model for them. They practise their social skills and coordination skills in a fun and safe environment.

Benefits for older buddy:

Planning and organising the tabloid sports day involves discussion, negotiation, compromise and organisation. Students take responsibility for the successful running of the day. They need to model a range of social skills such as fair play, including everyone and being positive.



H&PD 10 – Buddy bus stops (key: L, O, V)

Large freestanding cut-outs (child size) of Buddy Bear can be made and used as ‘bus stops’ to be placed in the playground. They look great as freestanding wooden statues. Older monitors can be trained and made responsible for coordinating activities/support for each bus stop. Bus stops could be things like ‘Stop here to find a friend’, ‘Stop here to play a game’, ‘Stop here to help in the garden’, ‘Stop here to listen to a story’. Try to link in with activities that your school runs at lunchtime. If possible, ask families, local businesses or other volunteers to help create the Buddy Bear stops.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Providing a range of activities at lunchtime helps younger students to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies learn organisational skills and develop responsibility by being on a roster to lead a range of activities for younger students.

The whole school benefits from the provision of lunchtime activities, as children are forming bonds of friendship and support. Also, children who are busy are less likely to get into trouble or engage in bullying behaviours.



H&PD 11 – Values role playing (key: AS, e)

Divide buddies into small groups. Each group selects a role-play scenario card (on the accompanying activity sheet). Give groups time to discuss their scenario and what would be an appropriate response to the situation. Groups can practise their scenarios and then perform them in front of the class.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Working with older buddies will provide insight into appropriate ways of solving common playground problems.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies practise leadership skills and develop responsibility by working with the younger students.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use eSmart web resources (such as www.cybersmart.gov.au, www.thinkuknow.org, or www.staysmartonline.gov.au) to view video scenarios to stimulate whole-class discussions.



H&PD 12 – Buddy fitness circuit (key: O)

In small groups, older buddies design a five-minute fitness circuit and then take the younger buddies through it. Try to include Buddy Bear in the circuit.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger children will practise their social and coordination skills in a fun and safe environment.

Benefits for older buddy:

Planning and organising the fitness circuit involves discussion, negotiation, compromise, and organisation. Students take responsibility for the successful running of the session. They need to model a range of social skills such as playing fairly, including everyone and being positive.



H&PD 13 – Let's take a walk (key: L, V, O, e)

Take children on walking excursions around the local area. This activity could be part of a theme on 'Our Community'. Younger children walk next to their older buddy. Older buddies can help the younger children with crossing roads, staying with the group and keeping up. Good places to visit could include the park for a play or the local shops to buy an ice cream.

Older buddies can draw a map, help plan the route and activities and organise a permission notice to be sent home to their younger buddy's family.

Buddy Bear could be brought along for the outing. Children could take turns being responsible for carrying Buddy Bear in a backpack.

Consider taking or buying lunch, but be mindful of ensuring that all students are included.

Social skills and values:

- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- leadership.

Benefits for younger buddy:

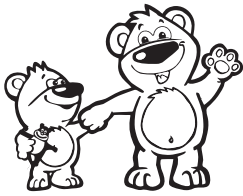
Gives the younger buddy an opportunity to spend time having fun with their older buddy who is acting as a role model for behaviour while walking and crossing roads.

Benefits for older buddy:

Leadership gained through planning the route and activities and perhaps organising a notice to be sent home to the younger buddy's family.

eSmart Schools connection:

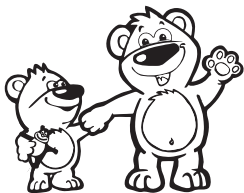
While walking around the local community, look for places that provide access to computers or other digital technologies (e.g. library, community centre, café). Discuss students' responsibilities when using this technology outside of school.



A BUDDY LOOKS/SOUNDS/ACTS/THINKS LIKE

Name/s: _____

<p>A buddy looks like...</p>	<p>A buddy sounds like...</p>
<p>A buddy acts like...</p>	<p>A buddy thinks like...</p>

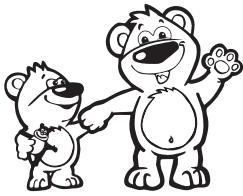


RECIPE FOR A BUDDY

Name/s: _____

Ingredients: _____

Method: _____



VALUES ROLE PLAYING

SCENARIOS

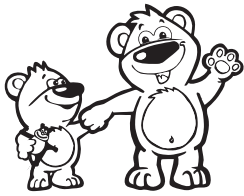
These activities are designed to be work-shopped and performed as role-plays by the students.

An older child wants to play basketball with his mates at lunchtime, but his younger buddy wants to play with him. The older child does not want to upset his younger buddy, but he also wants to play with his friends. What should he do?

At lunchtime you see a group of children teasing another child because he isn't very good at reading. The child being teased is crying. What should you do?

While playing at lunchtime you notice a new child sitting by themselves with no-one to play with. What should you do?

A few weeks ago you bought some new coloured pencils for school. At first you shared them with other children, but they did not look after them. Now those children say nasty things to you if you don't want to share your pencils. What should you do?



It is a wet day, so you are staying inside at play time. The older buddies come to the younger buddies' class to play games. A group of children decides to play snakes and ladders. One of the younger children starts crying because she didn't win. What should you do?

Two junior children have an argument over whose turn it is to bat in the game of cricket they are playing. They both end up crying. They go to an older buddy for help? What should the older buddy do?

A group of children is teasing another child because she had head lice. She is upset and crying. What should you do?

It is play time and a young child keeps falling over because both her shoe laces are undone. There are big children nearby. What should they do?



Literacy

Lit 1 – Buddy story reading (key: L, e)

Older buddies go to the library to choose books they think their younger buddy would enjoy. Buddies then get together for a buddy reading session where the older buddy reads stories to the younger buddy.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- caring and support
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Having older children reading to them provides an excellent role model and helps to develop fluency and comprehension skills. It can also give younger children something to aspire to.

Benefits for older buddy:

Gives the older buddy an opportunity to develop their oral reading skills, focus on engaging the listener/s and an opportunity to enjoy picture books.

eSmart Schools connection:

Many children's books now have online versions which buddies may enjoy reading or listening to together. If viewing content on sites such as YouTube, discussion should take place with older buddies about appropriate content and the possibility of potentially inappropriate pop-ups or advertising.



Lit 2 – Buddy letter system (key: I, L, e)

Set up a Buddy letterbox in the school where children can post letters to each other. Senior children can take turns being the 'postie' and delivering the mail. Each class can make its own letterbox for mail to be delivered. Children could also have their own individual letterboxes.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This activity helps to develop their writing skills, their understanding of the process of mail delivery and perhaps provides a new way to communicate.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies can practise their writing skills and will develop a sense of anticipation for the mail to arrive. They will also begin to learn letter writing rules and etiquette.

eSmart Schools connection:

Children can use the Letter Writing interactive on the Better Buddies website to write their letters betterbuddies.org.au





Lit 3 – I am a good buddy because... (key: AS, e)

Older and younger buddies (with older buddy's help) each complete the sentence 'I am a good buddy because' in a speech bubble. A speech bubble template with room to add a photo or drawing of the buddies is provided on page 81. Display the sentences around the buddy classrooms.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Children's awareness of why they are involved in a buddy program is reinforced by this activity.

Benefits for older buddy:

Children's awareness of why they are involved in a buddy program is reinforced by this activity.

eSmart Schools connection:

Take digital photographs of the students and use these when displaying the completed sentences. Check to ensure that all children are allowed to be photographed.



Lit 4 – TV or book character buddies (key: e)

In buddy pairs, or small groups, children brainstorm a list of characters from television shows, movies or books, who are friends (e.g. Bert and Ernie, Nemo and Dory, Harry Potter, Hermione and Ron, B1 and B2). The older buddy should record the examples. Compile the separate brainstorms into a whole-class list then discuss how these friends treat and look after each other.

Buddies then make a 'Friends or Buddies' class book where they write 'X (character or student) and Y are friends because ...'. Illustrate together with a picture of themselves on one side and a picture of the TV or book character friends on the other side.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- friendliness
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Children reflect on friendship skills and what is necessary to be a friend.

Benefits for older buddy:

Children reflect on friendship skills and what is necessary to be a friend. Older children help to facilitate discussion and lead the activity. They may need to have a short discussion before running this activity.

eSmart Schools connection:

Buddies use the internet to gather information or photographs about famous TV or book character friendships. They may wish to download photos for use in their own book. This should lead to discussion with older buddies about copyright, ownership of web content and appropriate referencing.



Lit 5 – Transition postcards (key: AS, V, e)

Students who will become older buddies in the following year write friendly, welcoming postcards to the students who will be beginning school. The Buddy Bear postcard template can be used for this activity. The postcards could be presented to the younger students on an orientation day or posted to them before the new school year begins. If posting they will need to be placed in an envelope and addressed correctly.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps to make the younger children feel welcomed and safe when they begin school.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children gain empathy from remembering what it was like to start school.

eSmart Schools connection:

Postcards could be designed online and emailed to the family of the new student. Discuss privacy of personal information.



Lit 6 – ‘Take-home book’ reading buddies

A small number of interested older buddies go to the younger buddies’ classrooms and help with the ‘home reading’ program by reading the younger buddy’s ‘take-home book’ to them. Note that the older child is not hearing the younger child read, they are reading the take-home book to the younger child. After having their book read to them, younger children can practise reading or re-telling their take-home book to Buddy Bear.

If students are allowed inside the classroom before classes begin, this activity can be run in the morning.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

It is highly beneficial for beginning readers to hear their take-home book read to them as it helps to build fluency and comprehension skills. This can be a time-consuming process for one teacher, so having buddy volunteers makes the task achievable.

Benefits for older buddy:

The older buddies have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and feel a sense of achievement as they watch their younger buddies improve their skills. It also gives the older buddies a chance to reflect on their own learning and the opportunity to work on their fluency and expression.



Lit 7 – Teaching the alphabet and sight words (key: e)

Organise older buddies into five groups. Allocate each group one day of the week to go to the classroom of their younger buddies for an agreed-upon amount of time. Each older buddy then helps their younger buddy to learn letters, sounds and sight words. You may wish to have a special ‘I am a Buddy Helper’ badge for older buddies to wear in the classroom when this activity is running.

Note: If students are allowed inside the classroom before classes begin, this activity can be great to run in the morning.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Working one-to-one is a great way for children to learn letters, sounds, and sight words. Older buddy tutoring increases opportunities for this and reinforces that learning these skills is important. Using buddies also provides a non-threatening environment for the younger children.

Benefits for older buddy:

It provides the older buddy with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, reinforce their own literacy knowledge and feel a sense of achievement as they watch their younger buddies improve their skills over the year.

eSmart Schools connection:

There are many websites that provide great games or other resources for practising letters and sight words. Older buddies could be encouraged to select suitable ones (after discussing selection criteria) to use with the younger students.



Lit 8 – Book making (key: e)

As part of the literacy program buddies can make books. They can do this separately to give to each other or work together to create a book to share. Some book ideas/topics are:

- ‘All about me’
- ‘Why I like you’
- ‘You are special because...’
- The current area of study in class
- ‘Adventures of Buddy Bear’.

Books can be published, bound and used in a buddy reading session.

At the beginning of the year, older buddies could prepare a book with lots of pictures and drawings to introduce the new students to their uniform, eating and playing areas, school rules and values.

Social skills and values:

- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Children are given a meaningful context for writing. Children reflect on friendship skills and what is necessary to be a friend.

Benefits for older buddy:

Children are given a meaningful context for writing. Children reflect on friendship skills and what is necessary to be a friend.

eSmart Schools connection:

Students could use book making software to create their books and include photographs or video content. This should lead to discussion with older buddies about copyright, ownership of web content and appropriate referencing.



Lit 9 – Buddy Bear’s guide to school (key: e)

Older buddies make a class big book for the new students as a guide to school life. Remind them to keep it positive. Photographs, drawings and maps could be included where appropriate. Below are examples of the type of information that could be included:

- Only students up to grade two are allowed to play in the junior playground behind the art room.
- Wear a hat outside at playtime.
- Eat food in the eating area.
- Assemblies are on the netball court on Monday mornings.
- There are always teachers on yard duty at play times.

The book can be written by Buddy Bear, or each page could have a picture of Buddy Bear demonstrating the information.

Social skills and values:

- friendliness
- caring and support.

Benefits for younger buddy:

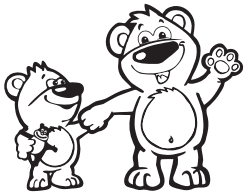
This begins to foster feelings of connectedness to the school.

Benefits for older buddy:

This activity provides an authentic audience for the writing task and will help older buddies feel empathy towards younger students as they reflect on what it was like when they started school.

eSmart Schools connection:

Students could make an online video to be viewed by the new students and uploaded to the school’s website or intranet. Discuss appropriate language use for young viewers. At the end of the year, younger buddies could help to review the video and perhaps contribute to a new one for the following year.



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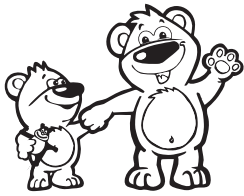
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I AM A GOOD BUDDY BECAUSE....

Name/s: _____

I am a good buddy because....

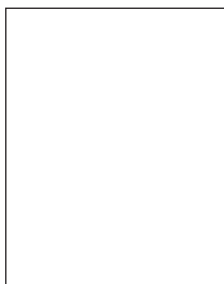


TRANSITION POSTCARDS

Hello

**Looking forward
to meeting you
at our school...**

**from an
older buddy**





Numeracy

Num 1 – Sports tipping competition (key: L, e)

Choose a group of children from the senior class to organise and run a sports tipping competition among interested children from both senior and junior classes. These children are responsible for collecting everyone's tips, recording and tallying results and putting them on display. During a maths lesson, senior buddies can develop their own tipping form. They can also help their younger buddy to fill in their tip sheet each week.

Buddy Bear could be dressed in sporting team colours for the duration of the competition and the teacher could secretly fill in Buddy Bear's tips each week.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy

Younger children are included in something engaging and fun and in which the older children are interested. Children enjoy being part of something that everyone finds exciting.

Benefits for older buddy:

Running a sports tipping competition provides an opportunity for older students to use their leadership and organisation skills. Running a competition that has other students interested will also boost the self-esteem of the students organising it. It gives the older students an opportunity to use their 'chance and data' mathematical skills in a real-life situation.

eSmart Schools connection:

Students could create an online tipping form to be uploaded to the school's intranet. This should happen after discussion about protecting private information online.





Num 2 – Buddy cube (key: AS)

Using one of the provided cube net templates, children write or draw information either about their buddy or about themselves to give to their buddy. Each face of the cube can have a different piece of information, for example:

- name and/or a photograph
- number of people in their family
- favourite food
- favourite game or toy
- favourite colour
- what they look like (draw a picture of their face).

Older buddies can help younger buddies to cut out and paste the net together. Tape a piece of string to the cube and hang them around the classroom.

Make up an example cube using Buddy Bear to show the children how the activity is done.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- friendliness
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps the younger buddy connect with the older buddy by discovering what they have in common. Builds conversation and discussion skills. Helps the children identify with others and feel that other people are interested in them.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps the older buddy connect with the younger buddy by discovering what they have in common. Builds conversation and discussion skills. Helps the children identify with others and feel that other people are interested in them. Older children can acknowledge their own competency and gain pleasure from helping others. Geometry knowledge is also reinforced when making the net.



Num 3 – Venn diagram (key: AS)

Buddies work together to make a Venn diagram, on page 88, of 'Things I like'. Include writing and illustrations. They can report to the whole group and share some of the things they both like. Make a display of the Venn diagrams for others to see.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps the younger buddy connect with the older buddy by discovering what they have in common. Builds conversation and discussion skills and demonstrates how to present information in a graphic form.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps the older buddy connect with the younger buddy by discovering what they have in common. Builds conversation and discussion skills.



Num 4 – Cooking (key: L, V, e)

Buddies work together or in small groups to cook simple recipes such as pikelets, cupcakes, Chocolate Crackles™, rocky road or Honey Joys™ then sit together and enjoy their snack.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger buddies practise sharing, taking turns and cooperating while having fun with food. They use simple measurement knowledge in a real-life situation.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children love making these simple recipes. They will need to practise their skills of sharing, taking turns and not taking over. They can also help to teach or reinforce simple measurement knowledge.

eSmart Schools connection:

Take digital photographs of the cooking experience and upload them to the school's website (check if any children should be exempt from this activity). Students could make an online book about the activity.



Num 5 – Treasure hunt (key: O, e)

Older buddies are responsible for organising and setting up a treasure hunt for the younger buddies. They must produce a map, with directions, to be followed by the younger buddy. The hunt can include more than one item of treasure to find. The map and directions should be in child-friendly language and use pictures where possible. Encourage the older buddies to include Buddy Bear as part of the hunt.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

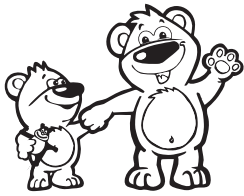
Younger children benefit by playing cooperatively. They follow instructions and have fun in a safe environment.

Benefits for older buddy:

Planning the treasure hunt involves discussion, negotiation, compromise, and organisation. Students take responsibility for the successful running of the session. They need to model a range of social skills such as fair play, including everyone and being positive.

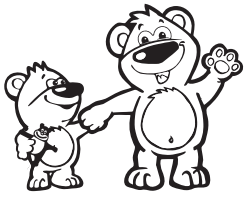
eSmart Schools connection:

Older buddies could create an online treasure hunt, or webquest, to teach their younger buddies some basic internet searching skills. The hunt could include finding a particular website, or locating information within a site.



BUDDY CUBE

My favourite food		
My favourite colour	My name	Number of people in my family
My favourite game or toy		
This is what I look like		



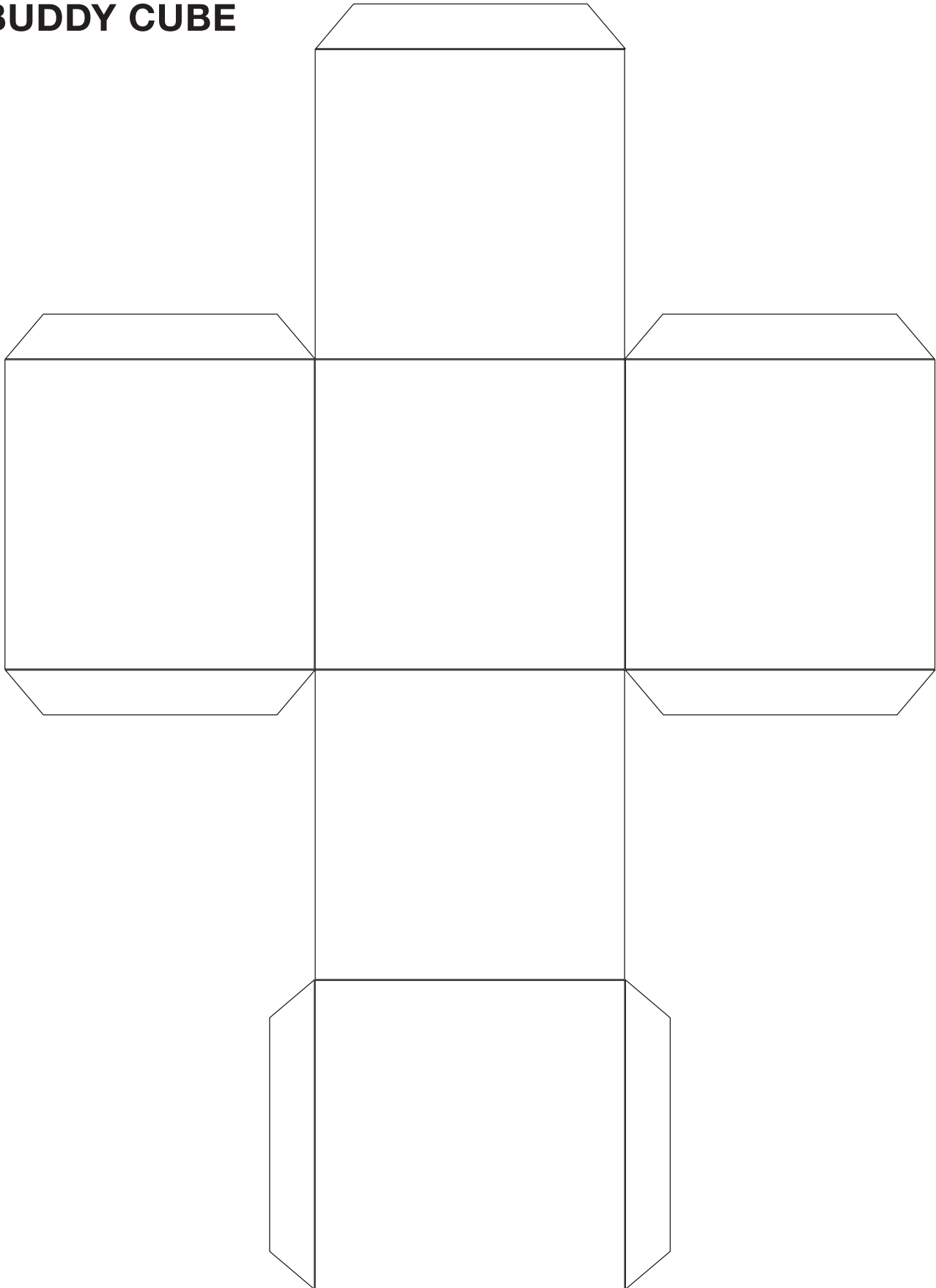
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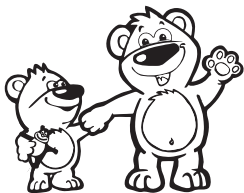
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BUDDY CUBE





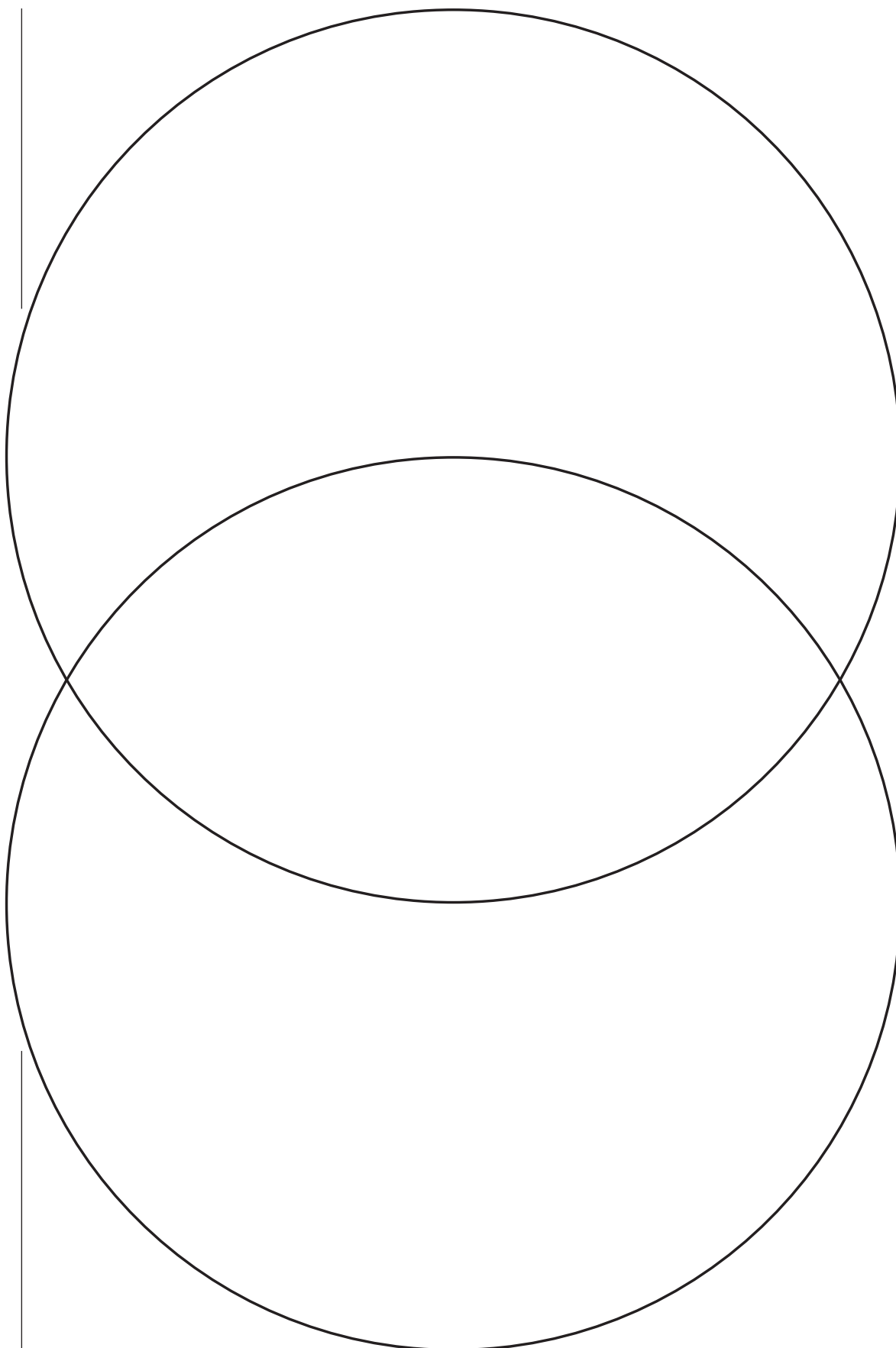
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VENN DIAGRAM





Arts

Art 1 – Charcoal portraits

Using a charcoal pencil, buddies sketch portraits of each other. Mount the portraits on black cardstock and display them in classrooms or around the school with the name of the subject and artist included. Students may also wish to sketch portraits of Buddy Bear.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Children will feel valued by being the subject of an older child's drawing. They may experience a new artistic medium and have the pleasure of seeing their work displayed.

Benefits for older buddy:

Children find ways to depict their subject in a respectful way. They also take pleasure in receiving pictures from their younger buddies.



Art 2 – Teaching the national anthem or school song

Small groups of older buddies are responsible for teaching small groups of younger buddies the national anthem or school song.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger buddies feel part of the school community by learning the songs that other students sing.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies learn to be tolerant, patient, and how to treat others with respect as they teach their younger buddy.





Art 3 – Friendship bands (key: L)

Students make friendship bands or bracelets by plaiting, twisting or knotting wool or string together. This can be done:

- with buddies working together to make the bands
- with buddies working separately to make bands for each other
- as a whole-school lunchtime activity in the library or art room with students being able to make bands for whoever they want (buddies and other friends).

Students could also make a friendship band for Buddy Bear.

Social skills and values:

- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps develop fine motor skills. Receiving a friendship band or bracelet will help build self-esteem.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children will develop cooperation and leadership skills helping the younger buddies. They will also enjoy receiving their own friendship band or bracelet.



Art 4 – Buddy bodies

In buddy pairs, children trace outlines of each other's body onto large paper, then work together to decorate or dress their outlines. Alternatively, if completing in conjunction with a 'my body' unit of work, they could fill in vital organs and/or the skeleton. Use the outlines to create a display in a prominent area of the school. Names and information about the buddies could be added.

As an extension activity, children could be given an outline of Buddy Bear to dress/decorate as they like.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This activity will help develop the social skills of sharing, taking turns, cooperation and treating others respectfully.

Benefits for older buddy:

This activity will help develop the social skills of sharing, taking turns, cooperation and treating others respectfully.



Art 5 – Buddy friendship quilt (key: V)

Provide each child (older buddies and younger buddies) with a 20 cm square of calico material to decorate using puff paint, fabric paint, textas, glitter, buttons, charms, beads, felt etc. Encourage students to think about the concepts of friendship when they choose their decorative design.

Buddy Bear could be drawn or painted on a square to be placed in the middle of the quilt with something appropriate written underneath. For example, 'Happyville Primary School is a Buddy Bear School', your school motto or school values.

Sew all the squares together to make a quilt. Display the quilt in the school entrance way or another prominent position.

Note: Be sure to allow a 3 cm border (possibly purple to emphasise the Better Buddies theme) around the edge of each square so that they can be sewn together.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Children are thinking about and expressing the concept of friendship in a visual art form.

Benefits for older buddy:

Children are thinking about and expressing the concept of friendship in a visual art form.



Art 6 – Buddy photo frames (key: e)

Children make a photo frame out of cardboard and painted pasta. They could use alphabet pasta letters to make the word 'Buddy' or similar. A photo of themselves is then put into the frame (the photo could be brought from home or taken by the older buddy and printed) and the frame given as a gift to their buddy at the start or end of the year. Alternatively, children could keep their own frame and place a photo of themselves with their buddy in it.

As a demonstration for this activity, a photo frame could be made for a picture of Buddy Bear.

Social skills and values:

- friendliness
- caring and support.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger buddies will feel valued by receiving a gift which helps them to feel part of the school community.

Benefits for older buddy:

Provides a meaningful reason to learn or practise digital publishing skills by manipulating and printing images. People usually feel good about themselves when giving gifts.

eSmart Schools connection:

If the school has digital photo frames, upload pictures and display in the classroom or front office area. Check to ensure that all children are allowed to be photographed. Use this as an opportunity to discuss permission with the older buddies in relation to taking, editing or displaying someone else's photo.



Art 7 – Puppets

Children work together to make hand or finger puppets. They can then put on a play by acting out a story they know, making up their own script or using existing plays. Buddies could work together, or in their own classes, and then perform the plays for their buddy class.

Note: Making a puppet theatre is a good extension activity for children. An adult or volunteer may be able to help with this project.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

The younger children observe and practise values in action, an activity they share with an older mentor. They also get an authentic opportunity to practise performing and speaking skills.

Benefits for older buddy:

The older buddy can use and practise literacy and performing skills in a safe environment, and with an authentic audience.



Art 8 – Buddy mosaic (key: L, V, e)

Buddies work together to produce a tile mosaic. Tiles can then be displayed as is, or cemented into a wall, walkway or garden border in the school. Try to include Buddy Bear or the colour purple in to the tile designs.

Note: This activity may be expensive and might need to be planned for in the school budget. It will also require extra adult volunteers to supervise the cutting and gluing of tiles.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger buddies feel valued when they work on an important project beside their older buddies. They also feel as though they are making an important contribution to the school community.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies feel valued because they have an important role in contributing to a major project for the school environment.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use computer software to create the design and layout for the mosaic tiles.



Art 9 – Dance club (key: L, V, e)

Interested older buddies could run a dance club at lunchtime. They would be responsible for choosing music and choreographing dance moves to teach younger buddies. The routine could be performed at an assembly or creative arts occasion.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger children gain self-esteem when older children pay attention to and work with them. Both age groups' natural love of movement and music will create a common bond between them. This activity gives children something to do at lunchtime and encourages cross-age friendships.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older children are given responsibility for the planning of this activity. They will gain skills in leadership and organisation. To work successfully with the younger children they will need to accept differences in skill levels. This activity gives children something to do at lunchtime and encourages cross-age friendships.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use online music sites to create a playlist for the dance club. Discuss the issues of piracy, copyright and ownership of online content with older buddies.



Science

Sc 1 – Buddy garden (key: L, V, O, e)

Buddies are given a patch of garden to plan and care for together. Parents, other volunteers or local businesses may assist the teacher by helping students to plan the layout, select appropriate plants, and consider watering and any associated restrictions. No-dig gardens may be an appropriate option for some schools.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- caring and support
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Younger buddies practise sharing and taking turns and cooperating while having fun in the garden. They are learning the responsibilities involved in caring for living things in cooperation with their older buddy and others from the community.

Benefits for older buddy:

Older buddies practise sharing, taking turns and cooperating while having fun in the garden. They learn to allow their younger buddies time to complete activities without taking over.

eSmart Schools connection:

Start a 'Buddy garden' blog for the school website. Include photographs and regular written contributions (from teachers, students and volunteers) to update parents about the progress of the garden.





Sc 2 – Tree planting (key: L, V, O, e)

Older and younger buddies work together to dig holes and plant tree seedlings in a designated area in the school grounds or around the local area. This is a great activity for Arbor Week or National Tree Day. Visit the Planet Ark website for more information: treeday.planetark.org

This is a great activity to do with the help of volunteers.

Social skills and values:

- sharing and taking turns
- caring and support
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps to develop a sense of ownership of the school and local environment.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps to develop a sense of ownership of the school and local environment.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use the internet to research areas in the local community which may benefit from a tree planting activity. Use online communication methods to connect with community groups who may be able to help students in a tree planting activity. Discuss use of appropriate language when communicating online.



Sc 3 – Bubble blowing (key: O)

Older and younger buddies work together to make bubble-blowing wands from pipe cleaners and bubble mix from a list of ingredients. They can experiment with changing the size and shape of the wand and the consistency of the bubble mixture to see what works best. A recipe for basic bubble mix is provided below.

Bubble mix recipe:

- 1 cup dishwashing liquid (find the cheapest brand as it tends to be used up quickly)
- 3 cups of water
- 1/8 cup of glycerin (this is not essential for the bubble mix to work but it makes the bubbles last much longer).

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This is an introduction to working scientifically. Children's wands and bubble mixes will have different degrees of success and older buddies can help them understand the reasons for this.

Benefits for older buddy:

This reinforces the concepts of working scientifically. Children's wands and bubble mixes will have different degrees of success and explaining reasons for this to younger buddies will reinforce older students' scientific understanding.



Technology

Tech 1 – Photograph placemats (key: e)

Older buddies take a digital photograph of themselves with their younger buddy. Then, using computer software such as Microsoft Publisher™, they make a placemat. Laminate the placemat for the younger buddy to take home or use while at school.

A photo of Buddy Bear could be used to demonstrate how to do this activity.

Social skills and values:

- friendliness
- caring and support
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Receiving the placemat gift helps the younger buddy to feel valued.

Benefits for older buddy:

Provides a meaningful reason to learn or practise digital publishing skills, and they can feel good about creating a gift for their younger buddy.

eSmart Schools connection:

When using computer software, such as Microsoft Publisher™ or Photoshop™, discuss with students the pros and cons of digitally altering images. Discuss where this occurs in real life and the issues that it may cause.



Tech 2 – Marble maze

Working as partners or in small groups, buddies construct a marble maze. Prizes could be given to the buddies who make the maze in which the marble takes the longest time to reach the end, the most elaborate, the team that is most cooperative and so on.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- acceptance of differences and including others
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction and working together.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction, working together, teaching younger buddies, consolidating their own knowledge, sharing, and learning not to take over an activity.



Tech 3 – Kite making (key: O, e)

Buddies work in pairs to plan and make a kite. The older buddies are responsible for listing and preparing all the materials required. Visit the local park to test out the kites.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- acceptance of differences and including others
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction and working together.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction, working together, sharing and learning not to take over an activity.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use websites to research kite designs and appropriate materials to use to build one. Discuss evaluating the accuracy and value of websites.



Tech 4 – Building Buddy Bear's house

Buddies work together to plan and construct a house in which Buddy Bear will fit. At the end of the activity, Buddy Bear can try out each group's house.

Social skills and values:

- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- caring and support
- organisation
- leadership
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction and working together.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps develop skills in building and construction, teaching the younger buddies, consolidating their own knowledge, working together, sharing and learning not to take over an activity.



Tech 5 – Paper aeroplanes (key: O, e)

Buddies work together to design and make a paper aeroplane. At the end of the session have a ‘fly-off’ to see how well they fly.

Social skills and values:

- playing fairly
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- friendliness
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction and working together.

Benefits for older buddy:

Helps develop skills in building, construction, teaching the younger buddies, consolidating their own knowledge, working together, sharing and learning not to take over an activity.

eSmart Schools connection:

Use websites to research plane designs. Discuss evaluating the accuracy and value of websites.



Tech 6 – Buddy fashion designers (key: AS)

Older buddies work with their younger buddies to brainstorm a list of possible situations Buddy Bear could be in and what would be appropriate clothes for each situation (focusing on seasons and weather would be a good place to start). Older buddy to guide their younger buddy in the choice of suitable material for each outfit. Using scraps of material make some outfits for buddy bear. The outfits can be glued to the Buddy Bear template provided on page 99.

Social skills and values:

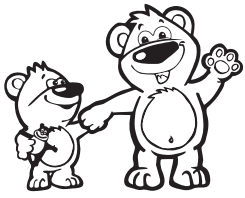
- negotiating
- sharing and taking turns
- treating others with respect
- friendliness
- cooperation
- no putdowns.

Benefits for younger buddy:

This activity will help develop the social skills of sharing and taking turns, negotiating and cooperating while having fun. They will also learn about selecting suitable materials for various purposes.

Benefits for older buddy:

This activity will help develop the social skills of sharing and taking turns, negotiating while having fun. They will also reinforce their own knowledge of the properties of materials while teaching the younger students.



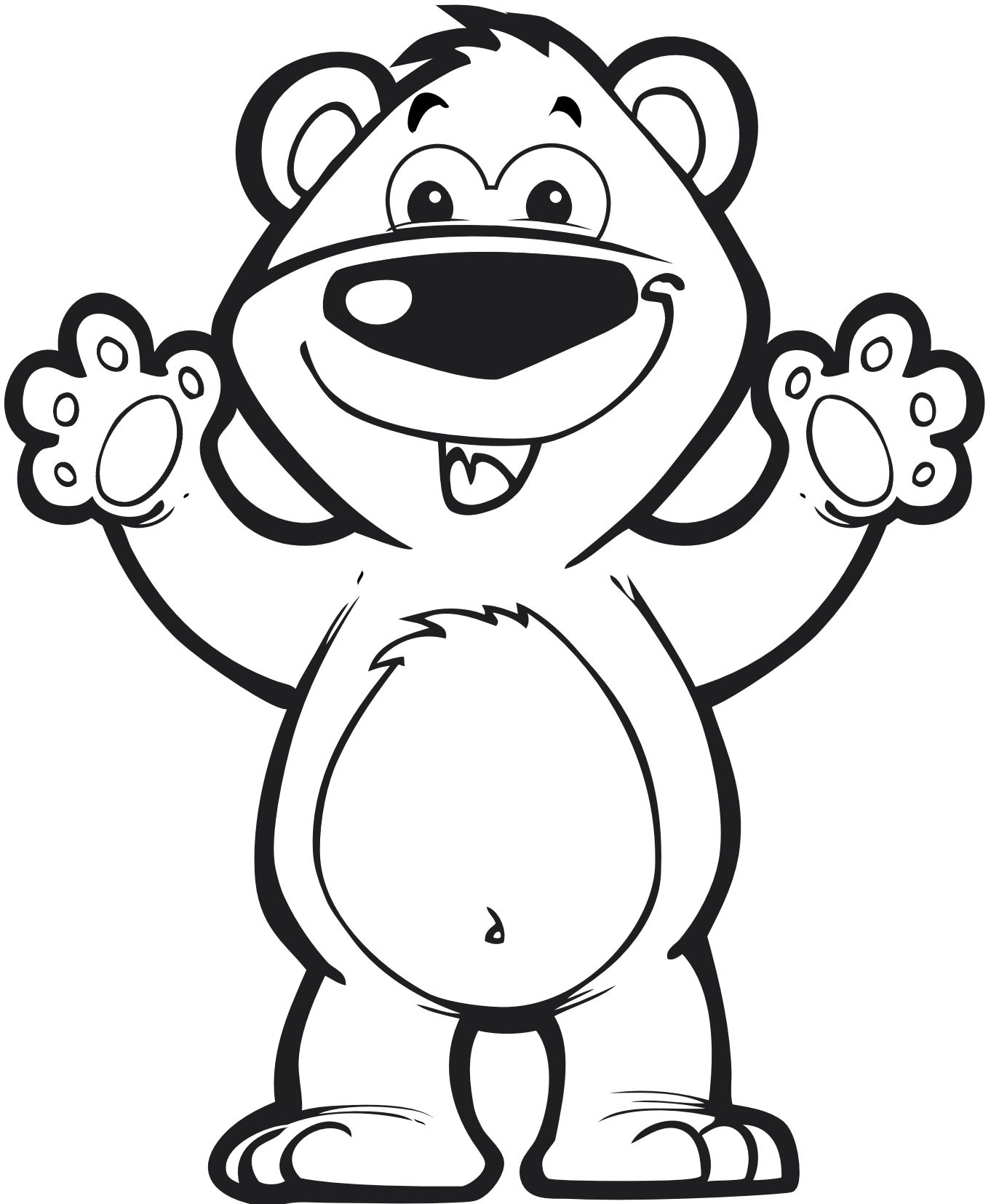
An initiative of

**The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation**

Keeping children safe from violence



BUDDY FASHION DESIGNERS





eSmart Schools

eSmart Schools introduction

What is the eSmart Schools framework?

eSmart Schools is a behaviour-change framework that guides the introduction of policies, practices and whole-school change processes to support the creation of a cybersafe or 'eSmart' environment. Schools can register by visiting www.esmartschools.org.au

What is an eSmart School?

An eSmart School is a school where the smart, safe and responsible use of information and communications technologies is a cultural norm. Students, teachers and the wider school community are equipped to embrace the best these technologies can offer, while being savvy about the pitfalls.

In eSmart Schools, relationships are strong and supportive and learning outcomes are enhanced. Bullying and cyberbullying are therefore less likely to thrive.

Can I incorporate eSmart Schools into Better Buddies?

Yes, you can.

Many of the activities outlined in the Better Buddies Framework have eSmart Schools connections. You can find these activities by looking for the 'e' next to the activity title on the contents (pages 61-62).

The tables on pages 101, 102 and 103 provide an overview of the eSmart Schools connections to activities in the Better Buddies framework.



eSmart Schools Connections

Activity	Overview
All about me (page 64)	Younger buddies are learning valuable computer skills. Discussion should take place regarding uploading pictures/video to a computer, where these images are stored and who will have access to them.
Buddy play time (page 64)	This activity encourages buddies to share their favourite websites or a suitable online game. It is an opportunity for older buddies to help their younger buddy to explore the internet in a safe and secure manner, with guidance from a more experienced partner.
Recipe for a buddy (page 65)	Buddies work together to search the internet for food recipes and then use a word processing program to create a recipe template.
Buddy meal (page 66)	Buddies use computers to locate simple-to-prepare recipes, create shopping lists and design and print menus for a shared meal.
School values poster (page 66)	Digital software is used to design a poster which is then uploaded to the school's website or newsletter.
A handful of buddies (page 67)	Staying safe online and the pros and cons of online social interactions can be discussed during this activity.
Values role playing (page 69)	Online resources are used to support discussion about staying safe online and where children can find help if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
Let's take a walk (page 70)	Students consider where they can access technology in the community outside of school. They discuss their responsibilities when using community-based resources.
Buddy story reading (page 75)	Buddies explore eBooks and other online stories together.
Buddy letter system (page 75)	An online letter writing interactive is used to write letters to buddies and others in the school.



Activity	Overview
I am a good buddy because... (page 76)	Digital photographs are taken and used to enhance this activity. Buddies can discuss the issue of posting photos online.
TV or book character buddies (page 76)	Buddies use the internet to gather pictures and information for this activity. Discussion is generated about copyright, ownership and appropriate referencing.
Transition postcards (page 77)	Postcards can be designed using computer software and then emailed to recipients. Discussion is generated about privacy of personal information.
Teaching the alphabet and sight words (page 78)	Older buddies select suitable online games to support their younger buddies in learning the alphabet and sight words.
Book making (page 79)	Buddies use book making software to create books including photographs or video content. The books can be shared in an eLibrary. Discussion is generated about copyright, ownership and appropriate referencing.
Buddy Bear's guide to school (page 80)	Older buddies make a video about their school for new students. The video could be uploaded to the school's website or intranet.
Sports tipping competition (page 83)	Older buddies create an online tipping form to be completed each week and keep tipping tallies using computer software.
Cooking (page 85)	Photographs to be taken of this activity and uploaded to the school or class web page or blog. Discuss guidelines for posting pictures online.
Treasure hunt (page 85)	Older buddies create an 'online treasure hunt' for their younger buddies to teach them about website navigation and safety.
Buddy photo frames (page 91)	Photos of students are uploaded to digital photo frames and displayed in the school.



Activity	Overview
Buddy mosaic (page 92)	Computer software is used to design tile mosaic patterns.
Dance club (page 93)	Online music is used to create a playlist for the dance club. Issues of piracy, copyright and ownership of online content are discussed.
Buddy garden (page 94)	Students start a 'Buddy garden' blog for the school website.
Tree planting (page 95)	Students use the internet to connect with community groups to partner with the school in tree planting programs. Students explore the use of language in online communications.
Photograph placemats (page 96)	Older buddies use digital software to create placemats for their younger buddy. The pros and cons of digitally altering images and where this happens in real life are discussed.
Kite making (page 97)	Kite designs are researched using the internet.
Paper aeroplanes (page 98)	Plane designs are researched using the internet.



MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR BETTER BUDDIES FRAMEWORK





SECTION 7: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR BETTER BUDDIES FRAMEWORK

Better Buddies Key Events

To help reinforce the values of the Better Buddies Framework, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has developed four Key Events that run at various times during the school year. These can be extended to whole-school events. They are supported by staff at The Alannah and Madeline Foundation who can provide information, plans and activities to assist with organising all four events. The Key Events have been developed to complement existing annual activities in the school calendar.

We recommend that schools have four Better Buddies Key Events each year – one each term, or spread out over the school year to suit the school calendar. This keeps the ideas and values of Better Buddies in everybody's mind and is also fun for the whole school community.

If you have community volunteers to help run your Better Buddies program this is an excellent time to use them. It is also the perfect time to contact local businesses and organisations, let them know what you are doing, and see if they are interested in helping and/or being involved.

Better Buddies Welcome

You can plan one or a series of events to take place at the start of the school year when the younger buddies commence school. Better Buddies Welcome aims to bring buddies together for a range of getting-to-know-you activities that will introduce the older buddies to the younger buddies and help develop these crucial relationships. February 14 (Valentine's Day) can be designated 'Friendship Day' and activities designed around the theme of 'friendliness'.

Better Buddies Games

The Better Buddies Games take place around May of the school year. Students come together to play non-competitive games, promoting the importance of cooperation, sharing, taking turns, negotiation, managing conflict and other important pro-social skills. In addition, it provides students with a range of games they could play during break times, which also helps to reduce bullying and other negative behaviour at these times. The games can be run as a number of stations with different games/activities at each. Buddies then rotate around with each Buddy pair or group having a turn at each station.

Better Buddies Games are also a great way to participate in National Buddy Day (see page 116) which happens at the beginning of June. Better Buddies Games can also be used as a focus on the Olympic or Commonwealth Games.

Better Buddies Book Week

Better Buddies Book Week is designed to coincide with Children's Book Week. It provides an avenue for buddies to engage in activities based around literacy and books – this includes reading, writing and illustrating books, as well as talking about characters and themes.

Better Buddies Celebration

The final Key Event for the year is the Better Buddies Celebration which takes place in November and includes activities for the orientation and transition of new students into the school. The Better Buddies Celebration is held in recognition of the year children spent together as buddies. Some schools will also introduce new buddies to their future older buddy, providing a non-threatening celebratory platform to ease their transition into the school. Use the younger and older buddies to help with the orientation of new students.





SECTION

8

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY





SECTION 8: INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Who can get involved?

The local community

Involving your local community in your school is a great way to build positive relationships and raise the profile of the school. There are many ways for local communities to get involved with the Better Buddies Framework. Children's work can be displayed in local community venues. Local malls, shopping centres, bank branches, galleries and libraries are often very happy to display children's work. Consider making a school 'display' during special Better Buddies timetabled events, at which photos and slide shows of the new buddies can be presented.

Once you get to know some different community organisations and groups, you may wish to turn one of your Better Buddies events into a community event. You might hold a Better Buddies picnic on the weekend, or in the evening, to include and celebrate your community helpers and also promote your school.

Community partnerships can offer students:

- valuable relationships with caring adults – mentors, volunteers and family members
- an awareness of resources, services and support available in the wider community
- an opportunity to learn new skills from volunteers
- a forum for acceptance of cultural difference through international clubs or via food, sport, dress and customs
- the opportunity to develop their communication skills through working with volunteers of different ages and backgrounds
- an opportunity for students to present information to 'authentic' audiences
- a chance to give back to the community.

There are many opportunities for schools to build long-term relationships with local communities, including parents, families, businesses, organisations, professionals and local government. Utilising the time, skills and expertise of community members can add great value to your school. The contributions of community volunteers to your school programs can:

- make your Better Buddies activities more valuable to your school and students
- help build relationships with community members who display different skills
- bring energy and creativity in your school
- supply specialist skills.

Business and corporate partners

The first step could be to collect information about the connections between parents, businesses and industries in the local area. Ask the local council for a list of the businesses in the area. The local real estate agents might be prepared to help with special signs a few times a year, for example, 'Buddy Bear welcomes new students' (for beginning enrolments). A local printer can help with special school announcements or signs, such as a special term newsletter or promotion of the Better Buddies Framework during Better Buddies Key Events. They may even help with a school calendar featuring new buddies over January and February and graduating buddies during December.



Service Clubs

Many organisations such as the local Rotary, Men's Shed, Probus or Lions Clubs will support a special project. For example, one group could donate a new Buddy Bear for every child, while another group supports a Better Buddies picnic. They also love to get feedback so arrange for a group of buddies to report back at one of their meetings.

How can volunteers help?

There are many skills that volunteers can contribute to extend the theme of the Better Buddies Framework:

- Artistic – making and firing tiles, mounting displays of children's work, painting murals, signs (e.g. 'We are a Better Buddies School' sign), preparing sets for school dramatic productions.
- Carpentry – using a jigsaw to cut outlines of Buddy Bear.
- Building – assisting with the creation of an outdoor play area that can be used for 'buddy activities'.
- Building – assisting with the creation of a Better Buddies Friendship Seat or table. Please refer to the Teachers login section of our website for details about this project.
- Cooking – helping with the school fete, setting up, cooking barbeque, serving food, managing clean-up, helping with morning or afternoon tea, lunch or supper for school events.
- Food knowledge to speak to students about health and nutrition.
- Gardening – helping with flower or vegetable gardens.
- ICT skills – school newsletter layout, editing school magazine, helping with layout, creating database of parent helpers and local businesses which donate to the school (see below, 'organisational skills').
- Landscape design – to be involved in creating a 'buddy' play area.
- Media – helping with publicity releases.
- Musical – accompanist, singer to help with school musical.
- Office skills – photocopying classroom materials, collating materials, organising prizes for end of year.
- Organisational skills – networking, sourcing and managing donations (e.g. meat, sausages, bread, paint, seedlings, fruit) and sponsorships.
- Painting – paint Buddy Bear cut-outs, Buddy 'bus-stops', a hopscotch outline on playground.
- People skills – helping children read, and other teacher support.
- Photography – still and video.
- Sewing – making or decorating costumes, outfits for plays, musical productions etc.
- Sporting – helping with school sports, organising tabloid sports, helping with cross-country (e.g. helping with marshalling children, or on a checkpoint).
- Stage experience – helping with lighting, sound, stage management for school dramatic productions.
- Writing – writing articles for school newsletters etc.

Planning for community involvement

- Hold a planning session with selected staff, student leaders and invited others to generate ideas.
- Buddies can help plan and produce posters to publicise the event.
- Send invitations to parents and family members to attend on the day.
- Seek community volunteer assistance.
- Organise a series of activities through which the children can be rotated on the day.
- Include some activities found in Section 6, and others available in the login section of the Better Buddies website.



Promoting Better Buddies to your community

Using the media

Please access the latest Alannah and Madeline Foundation and Better Buddies fact sheets (including media releases) through our Better Buddies website.

Your local media – newspaper, radio, television – could be very interested in your Better Buddies activities. In particular the Key Events through the year – Better Buddies Welcome, Better Buddies Games, Better Buddies Book Week and Better Buddies Celebration – will provide wonderful photo opportunities including the opportunity to showcase how you are involving community volunteers. You can also place information and photographs, plus examples of children's artwork in the newsletter and the school website.

Arranging the media visit

Arranging for your local media to visit can be done in one or more of the following ways:

- Your local media approaches you directly. The journalist could have heard about your Better Buddies activities or simply be calling to find out what newsworthy activities are happening in your school.
- You contact your local media directly to tell them about your Better Buddies activities. We strongly encourage you to establish a relationship with your local media as it will help promote the activities and achievements of your school. You can use the sample media releases on our website.
- If you are arranging a visit, it is part of the protocol in most schools to notify the principal that the media will be attending. You will also need to check the media release forms for your students to make sure you exclude any relevant children.

Preparing for the media visit

A couple of things need to be prepared prior to a media visit:

- Arrange for up to five pairs of buddies to be available for the photo.
- Seek parental permission for the children to be part of the media story.
- For the photograph we suggest that you get the buddies participating in activities and/or involving your community volunteers in the photograph. The photographer will give you further directions.

During the media visit – key messages

As well as talking to your local media about the Better Buddies activities happening in your school and the positive impact of the Better Buddies Framework on your students and school community, the following key messages should also be discussed:

- Bullying is a relationship issue which needs different relationship solutions, such as those facilitated by Better Buddies.
- Better Buddies is an initiative created by The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to create friendly and caring school communities where bullying is reduced.
- In Better Buddies, older children 'buddy up' with younger children and learn values such as friendliness, respect, responsibility, caring for others, including others and accepting differences, through both formal and informal activities.
- Having a buddy enables younger students to feel safe and cared for while at the same time the older students feel valued and respected.
- Buddy Bear is the mascot of the Better Buddies Framework. He is the friendly, purple teddy bear who embodies the Better Buddies values and gives special focus and meaning to Better Buddies activities.



Support from The Alannah and Madeline Foundation

The Foundation is happy to provide you with further support when dealing with your local media. The Alannah and Madeline Foundation has provided ideas for media releases and developed fact sheets for The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, The National Centre Against Bullying and Better Buddies. These are updated on the Better Buddies website. You can also contact the Foundation and speak with our Communications Team to help with this promotion. Our contact details can be found on page 1.



SECTION

9

COMMUNITY SERVICE – RAISING FUNDS FOR THE ALANNAH AND MADELINE FOUNDATION







SECTION 9: COMMUNITY SERVICE – RAISING FUNDS FOR THE ALANNAH AND MADELINE FOUNDATION

How you can help to ‘Keep Children Safe from Violence’

A great way to build relationships across the school is to involve buddies in a community service project and raise money for the Foundation. Working together on a charitable project is a good way to build relationships, and community service strengthens values of care and empathy.

There are many ways in which your school can help, and the money your school raises helps The Alannah and Madeline Foundation continue its work, keeping children across Australia safe from violence.

The Better Buddies Framework has been developed by The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to help support children’s transition to school and to create caring and safe environments in which to learn.

The Foundation also has a ‘Children Ahead’ team to provide support to children who have experienced or witnessed violence, helping them to regain a normal life.

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation does not receive ongoing government funding and relies on the generous support of donations and gifts-in-kind from our community and corporate friends.

Raising money for The Alannah and Madeline Foundation can be great fun, so feel free to get creative and come up with some fabulous ideas! Why not talk to your school council or junior school council about fundraising ideas?

National Buddy Day

National Buddy Day is the perfect time to raise much-needed funds for The Alannah and Madeline Foundation. National Buddy Day is held each year and provides a focus for a whole-school event which can include your wider school community. We encourage all schools to ‘Band Together’ and showcase, to the wider school community, the important work the school has been doing with the Foundation.

By ‘Banding Together’ to raise funds you’ll be helping to support The Alannah and Madeline Foundation in their bid to reduce bullying and create friendly and caring school communities.

All money raised will go towards introducing the Foundation’s Better Buddies Framework into more primary schools across the country.



Here are some ideas for National Buddy Day:

- Free dress day / dress in purple day
- Buddy barbecue
- Buddy walk or run
- Buddy games
- Buddy picnic
- Bring your teddy bear day
- Buddy breakfast
- Buddy activities during Education Week, Children's Week, Harmony Week etc.
- Buddy PJs day
- Decorate Buddy Bear day

These are just some ideas, so feel free to get creative, use your imagination and think of some fun and exciting ways to raise money for an important cause! The more people you involve, the more fun you have, and the more funds you will raise to keep children safe.

You might like to let everyone know about your fundraising efforts by putting a story in the school newsletter, or contacting your local newspaper.

Please feel free to give us a call to chat about the fun and exciting ways you can raise money for the Foundation. A member of our team is available to provide you with any support or advice you may need.

National Buddy Day is an initiative developed by NAB and The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to celebrate friendship and help raise awareness of bullying in Australian primary schools. On National Buddy Day, join thousands of other primary schools across Australia to show our support for raising awareness of bullying and to raise funds. Your donation will help the Foundation to fulfil its aim to grow the Framework and create more caring and friendly school environments where bullying is reduced.





SECTION

10

BACKGROUND INFORMATION







SECTION 10: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bullying

Bullying is everybody's problem. In Australia, as in other parts of the world, there is increasing awareness of the amount of bullying in our society and its short and long-term effects on the social and psychological health and educational achievements of all the individuals involved. We believe that every child has a right to be safe from victimisation, violence and abuse at school.

Bullying definition

It is difficult to find any universally accepted definition of bullying. We find the following definition helpful:

Bullying is a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (e.g. face-to-face) or covertly (e.g. through repeated social exclusion or via technology). It is a sub-category of aggression and is different to, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying.

The different types of bullying

- Face-to-face bullying (sometimes referred to as direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking, or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.
- Covert bullying (sometimes referred to as indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn't easily seen by others, is conducted out of sight, and is often unacknowledged by adults.
- Cyberbullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as instant messages, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

Most students who cyberbully also bully offline. It is now recognised that many forms of covert bullying appear to have significant potential for serious harm (Department of Education, National Safe Schools Framework Resource Manual, 2014).

Another way of looking at it is:

- When someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful and they do it once, that's rude.
- When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they do it once, that's mean.
- When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they keep doing it – even when you tell them to stop or they see you are upset, that's bullying (Ludwig, 2014).

Bullying is different from other forms of negative or distressing peer behaviour such as one-off acts of meanness or nastiness, conflict, one-off acts of rejection or exclusion, or random single incidents of physical or emotional aggression. Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and usually require teacher intervention and management.



There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

- **Mutual conflict**
In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students, but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation, with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
- **Social rejection or dislike**
Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.
- **Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation**
Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

Types of bullying behaviour

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- verbal or written abuse, such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters
- violence, including threats of violence
- sexual harassment, unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation
- homophobia and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality
- discrimination including racial discrimination, treating people differently because of their identity
- cyberbullying, either online or via mobile phone (DEECD, 2014).

What can schools do about bullying?

Acknowledge and identify the problem

No school is completely free from bullying. It is important to note that there are some common ways in which some students exercise more power over other students – for example, bullying on the basis of race, gender stereotypes, sexuality or abilities. Acknowledging that some forms of bullying are entrenched in schools is a first step towards developing systemic responses to them. Bullying is a learned behaviour, but it can be changed.

Addressing bullying needs to be part of a whole-school approach and included in relevant policies. A pattern of bullying persecution in a school, once developed, can become entrenched because students continue to be in contact with each other over time and it is not easy for the target to walk away or leave the situation. Schools that do not address the problem of bullying can become places where the more powerful dominate the less powerful, a process and set of attitudes behind 'domestic violence, child abuse, workplace violence, hate crimes and road rage' (Weinhold, 2000).

Survey students to find out how much bullying is going on within the school and where.

Use the survey results:

- to target 'hot spots' where, for example, increased supervision or extra play equipment might be needed
- as a baseline against which to compare later results
- to reflect on the forms of entrenched bullying most commonly experienced by students.



Develop a bullying policy

Develop a locally agreed and accepted definition of bullying (Hemphill, et. al, 2014). Involve all members of the school community in discussions. Develop a common language with which to talk about bullying. Use words that don't label students (e.g. 'target' rather than 'victim', 'bullying student' or 'perpetrator' rather than 'bully'). Ensure that management and responses to incidents of bullying fit with the values and philosophy of the school.

Make sure that all members of the school community know that bullying is wrong and no form of bullying will be tolerated in their school.

There is a useful template showing how to go about developing a policy in *Bullying Solutions* (McGrath & Noble, 2006). Safe school or anti-bullying policies also need to contain specific statements about homophobic, racist and cyber bullying.

Involve the community

Make sure there is discussion at every stage of policy development. It's more important to develop a document that has broad agreement over a lengthy period than to develop one quickly that nobody knows about. Adults need to understand that the 'no bullying' rule applies to them, too!

Ensure that the policy is supported by strong, easily understood implementation procedures. Each member of the school community needs to know that they must act when bullying happens, what to do and where their responsibility lies. We know that when bullying is ignored or not addressed promptly or effectively, those who are bullying perceive their behaviour as condoned by the organisation.

Prevention of bullying

A number of major international reviews and evaluations have sought to identify the most effective approaches, strategies and components for preventing and reducing bullying in schools (McGrath & Noble, 2006). These reviews confirm the following features are likely to be the most effective in preventing and reducing bullying:

- A universal whole-school approach, taking a multi-faceted approach rather than focusing on one single component and of long duration.
- An increased awareness of bullying in the school community through assemblies, focus days and student-owned plans and activities.
- A whole-school proactive policy addressing overt, covert and online bullying.
- Teacher understandings and competencies.
- Effective classroom management and classroom rules.
- Effective behaviour management methods consistently applied, non-hostile and non-punitive.
- A positive school environment providing safety, security and support for students and promoting positive relationships and wellbeing.
- School-family-community partnerships

Materials for your school

You will find much more useful information for schools, parents and students, including our 'Bullying Hurts' brochure at <http://ncab.org.au>



Pedagogy

Fundamental assumptions underpinning the Better Buddies Framework

Many researchers and writers now argue that social and emotional learning is as important as academic learning in the lives of students. It is essential to equip children with not only the academic skills they need, but also the social and emotional competence to use those skills effectively and responsibly. Promoting children's social and emotional competence benefits their educational motivation, their behaviour, their willingness to 'take a risk' when learning new material and their attachment to school. It also improves academic performance (Dockett & Perry, 2004).

Incorporating social and emotional learning (SEL) into the life of the school

Research has shown that social and emotional learning affects every aspect of children's development – their health, ethical development, citizenship, academic learning, and motivation to achieve (McGrath & Noble, 2003).

SEL refers to the process of acquiring the skills to recognise and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations effectively. Social and emotional learning should be incorporated into every aspect of the school: curriculum, pedagogy, policies, staff structures, peer support processes and relationship development.

Developing positive peer relationships

Students are more likely to have positive peer relationships when they are directly taught social skills, such as empathic responding, and given the opportunity to practise them in authentic and naturally occurring settings over a period of time. This cements the learning more than if the students are taught and then simply urged to use the social skills. Programs that teach social skills have also been shown to help promote student wellbeing, and to assist in the reduction of anti-social and bullying behaviours. Where a school's overall culture and classroom climate is based on respect for each other, bullying is reduced (Stanley, 2010).

Teaching children social skills

McGrath and Noble (2003) assert that although there are over thirty social skills that students need to learn, there are six that schools should focus on. They are:

- staying positive
- cooperating by sharing resources and workloads and taking turns
- active listening
- respectful disagreeing
- negotiation
- managing conflict.

Teaching students how to manage conflict helps to create a positive school environment. It allows students, and staff to accept differences, and it helps to combat the development and spread of anti-social behaviour and relationships.



Adopting a cooperative approach to teaching

The activities in the program are best undertaken within a classroom organised along collaborative lines. This is one in which:

- cooperative group work is the norm
- skills are taught to help students work in groups
- there are plenty of opportunities for students to practise social and cooperation skills
- children are involved in establishing classroom rules that let effective teaching and learning happen
- children are involved in negotiating what they learn, and helping to devise the criteria on which they are assessed.

Using literature

Literature allows children to explore a range of situations, including difficult ones, in non-threatening ways. Through exposure to these stories, children can understand that the problems they face are not unique, but are shared by many others. This may also assist in the development of empathy. You can use literature with references to teddy bear stories that also allows the focus to be removed from real children and allows discussion about situations to be related to a fictional 'other'.

Focusing vicariously on issues through the medium of literature can also encourage children to respond more freely. There will rarely be unanimous feeling on any issue, rarely 'right' or 'wrong' responses. However, differing points of view can provide an opportunity to teach the social skill of respectful disagreement.

Not all books need to be discussed straight after reading them. Sometimes it is better to enjoy a story and allow time for reflection before inviting discussion. Other times, the discussion will emerge immediately, as children ask questions and make comments about what they have heard.

Some children might find a topic or a situation encountered through literature to be threatening or to elicit emotions they find hard to manage. Be aware of this and sensitive to students' feelings. Some students might need further time to discuss or explore feelings. Be alert for students who need further help in the way of referral for specialised counselling.

Organising and managing the classroom

Set the climate of expectations for the children at the beginning of the year. This includes rules for the students to follow. One school we are familiar with has only one rule: respect, to which all relationships and interactions relate. Other schools concentrate on students' and teachers' rights, which are balanced by corresponding responsibilities. Including students in the negotiation of these rules and expectations is a very powerful way to achieve higher levels of cooperation.

It is important for you, as teacher, to lead by example, and to be prepared to share relevant and interesting aspects of your own life with the students. Being a good listener, who respects children's opinions, viewpoints and privacy is vital.

Other important skills include:

- using a quiet voice
- using low tone encourages students to do the same by modelling the desired behaviour – a raised voice signals to students that it is acceptable to yell
- using students' names to help make them feel important and give them a sense of belonging to the group.



Forming circles

‘Quality circles’, ‘cooperation circles’ and ‘circle time’ are group activities in which students meet regularly to identify and solve problems, air grievances, and offer suggestions in a safe and supportive environment. Circle processes encourage students to:

- cooperate with other students
- listen respectfully to the opinions and ideas of others
- develop their communication skills
- discuss problems
- develop empathy
- learn a variety of social skills, such as respectful disagreement
- develop relationships
- stay with the group
- keep their hands and feet to themselves
- avoid putdowns (Roffey, 2014).

We encourage your school to introduce ‘Circle Time’ in your Better Buddies Activities. They are a good way of organising meetings for staff as well!

Rewarding good behaviour

Many schools use a ‘caught you being good’ reward as a motivator for pro-social behaviours. A variation on this theme is to set up a ‘caught you being a buddy’ reward for children you notice are being good buddies.

Each time a child is ‘caught’ in a pro-social behaviour, a Buddy Bear token is given as a reward. These Buddy Bear tokens can be made of purple paper and laminated for protection. Buddy Bear tokens might entitle the recipient to choose a special treat, such as: a prize from a lucky dip box, sharing a game with a buddy, taking home a toy or game for the night, looking after the class pet or bear, using the class camera, using special pens and textas, using the computer, or playing a computer game. You can find Buddy Bear tokens to print in the login section of the Better Buddies website.

Many schools have a ‘Student of the Week’. This can be adapted to ‘Buddy of the Week’. Older students can also be used to identify students who are upholding the Better Buddies values in the playground for recognition across the school and/or in the newsletter.

Assessing and self-assessing

We have provided a rubric so that students can reflect on and assess their progress (see page 56).

Record keeping

We recommend that older buddies are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and are given a plastic display book in which to keep their reflection sheets and rubrics.

Encourage students to take part in planning rubrics for rules and social skills. Consider: what does this behaviour look like, sound like, act like and think like? Use the activity entitled ‘A Buddy Looks/ Sounds/ Acts/ Thinks Like’ (page 71) to help you talk about this. Work with the students to draw up rubrics at three levels, equating to poor, medium and good, showing smiley faces, ticks or stars for the levels.



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